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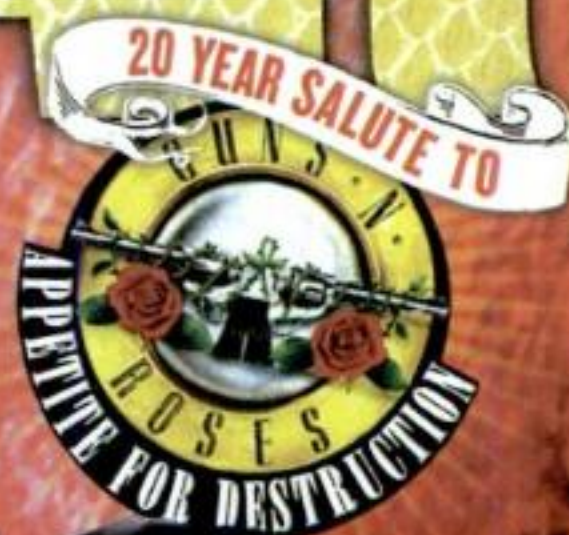
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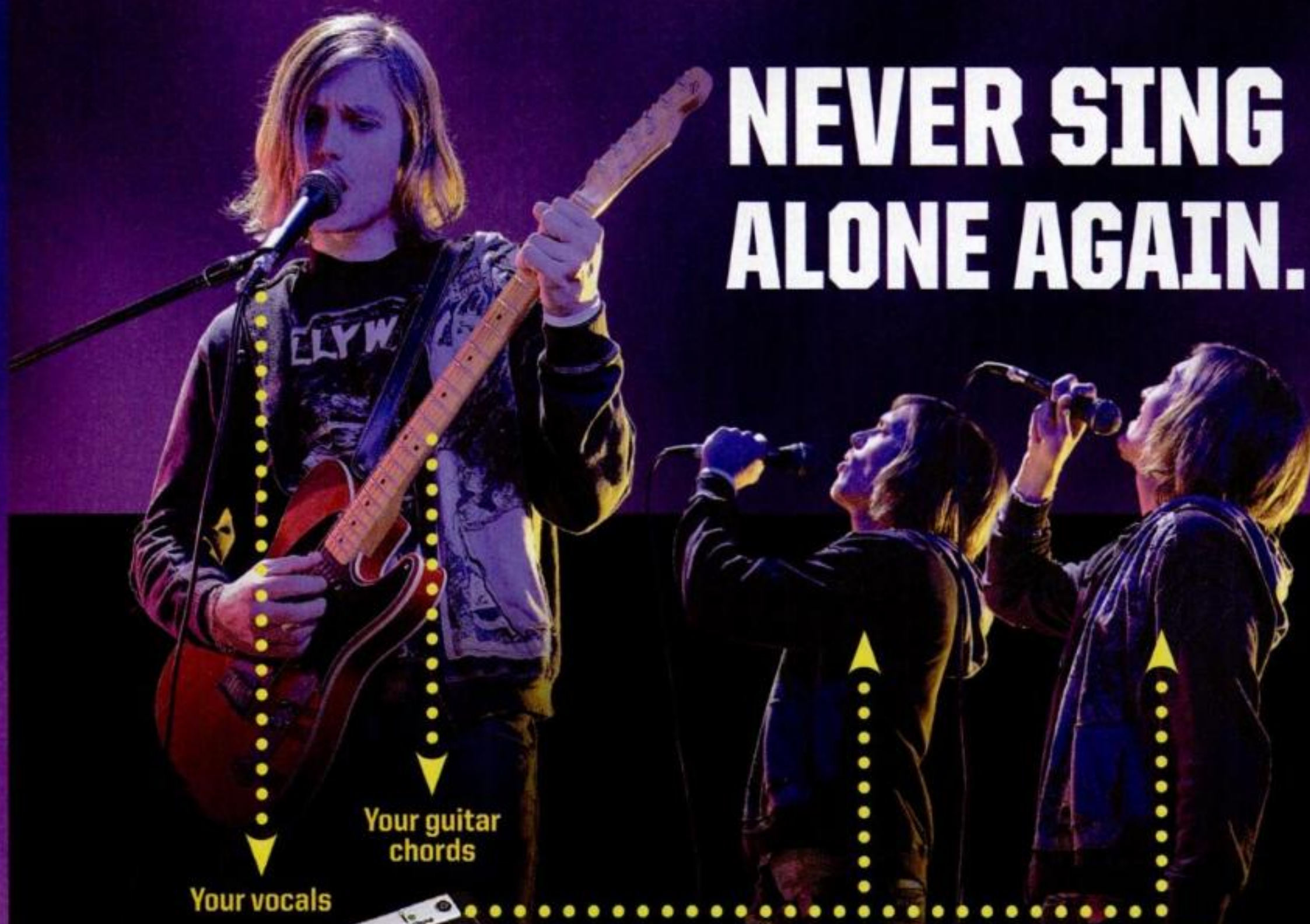
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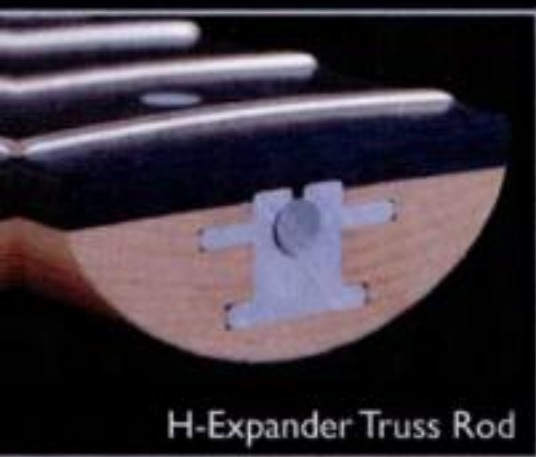
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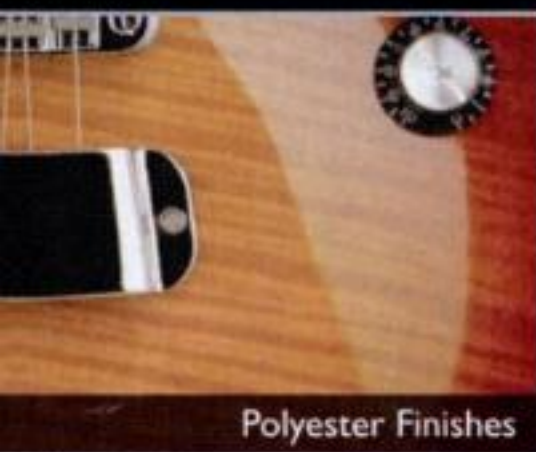
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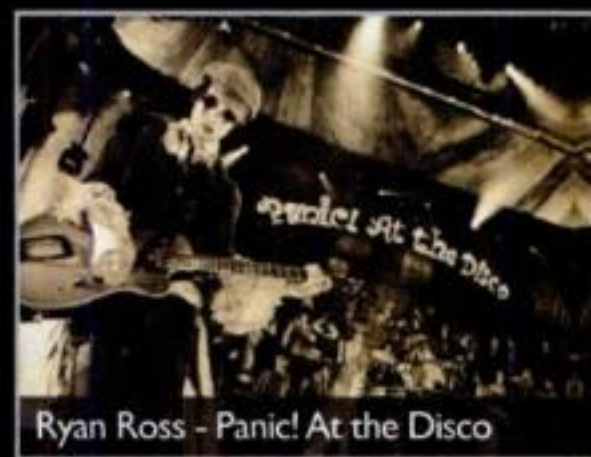
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CONTENTS

VOL. 28/ NO. 7 JULY 2007

FEATURES

46 G3 2007

The annual G3 shredfest is the hottest place for dazzling displays of guitar virtuosity. This year's tourmates Joe Satriani, John Petrucci and Paul Gilbert sit down to rap about licks, technique and the elusive virtue known as "style."

50 SLASH

Slash has shed his demons and changed up his guitar tone. And on Velvet Revolver's new album, *Libertad*, the former Guns N' Roses guitarist sounds better and badder than ever. Who says there are no second acts?

PLUS On the 20th anniversary of *Appetite for Destruction*, Slash recalls the making of the album that turned Guns N' Roses from raw recruits into seasoned superstars.

ALSO Meet Dave Kushner, Slash's coguitarist and Velvet Revolver's best-kept secret.

61 THE STOOGES

In 1969, the Beatles were history, the Manson family was on the loose and Vietnam was in flames.

The time was perfect for a band of misfits called the Stooges. Guitarist Ron Asheton revisits the punk precursors' chaotic history and tells how they reunited for their new album, *The Weirdness*.

PLUS Iggy Pop recalls his wild years with the Stooges and the forces behind the band's revival.

68 JOB FOR A COWBOY

After conquering MySpace and winning support from the man who discovered Metallica and Slayer,

Job for a Cowboy are riding the new wave of extreme metal on their Metal Blade debut, *Genesis*.

73 ESP GUITARS

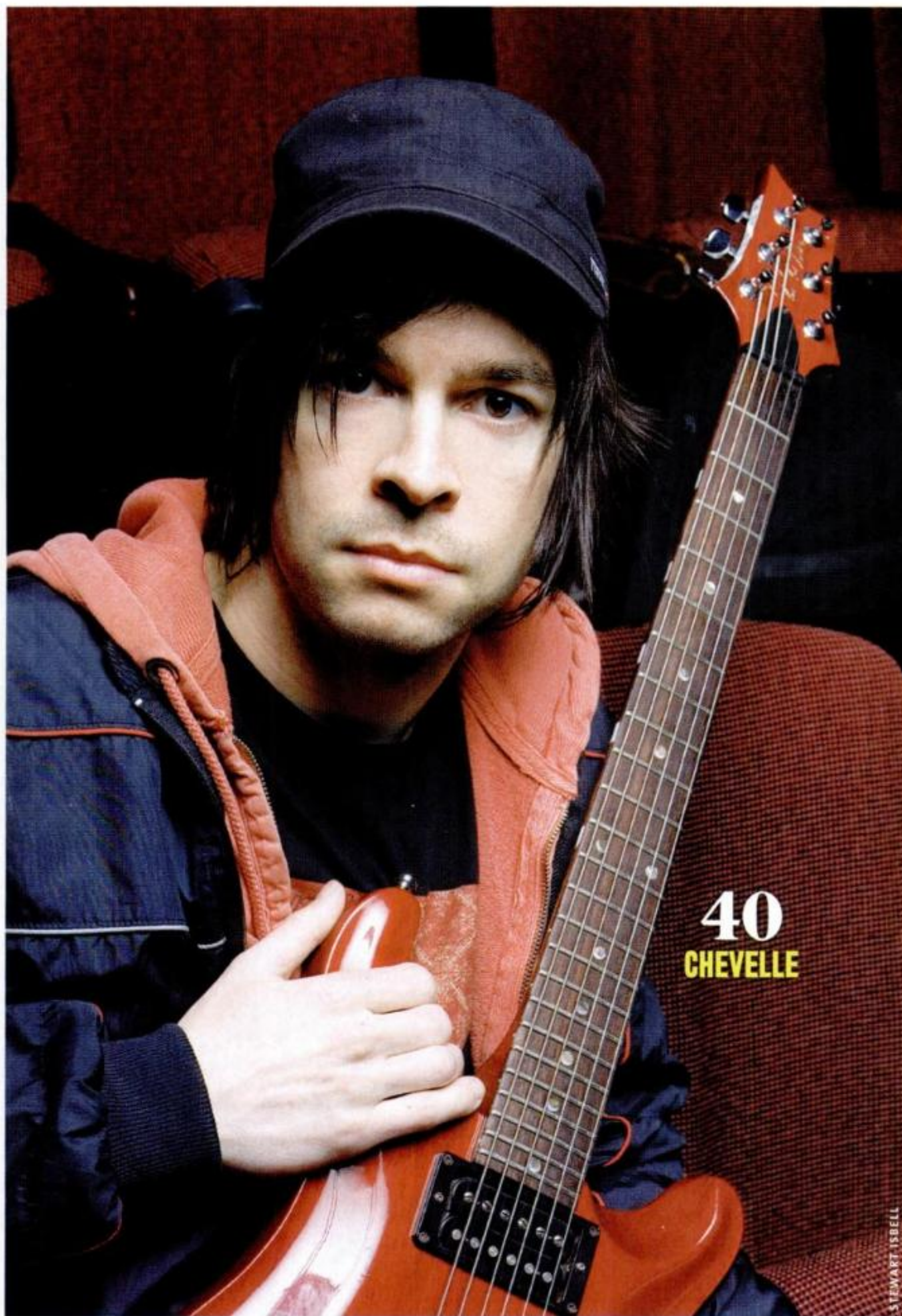
Since 1975, ESP has been conquering the world of metal guitar one guitarist at a time. George Lynch, Kirk Hammett and Alexi Laiho discuss their signature axes and contributions to the Tokyo guitar maker's history.

58
THE FIRST
INSTALLMENT
OF SLASH'S
NEW COLUMN,
THE CAT
IN THE HAT



CONTENTS

VOL. 28/ NO. 7 JULY 2007



40
CHEVELLE

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DEPARTMENTS

26 SOUNDING BOARD

Letters to the Editor & Defenders of the Faith

29 TUNE UPS

Atreyu studio report, the return of Wes Borland, Lamb of God's set list, Chevelle, GW Inquirer with Celtic Frost's Tom Gabriel Fischer, Kerry King's B.C. Rich Signature V, Dear Guitar Hero with Shadows Fall and more!

Betcha Can't Play This with Bill Hudson of Cellador

Record Reviews: Screamo triple shriek: the Used, Funeral for a Friend and From Autumn to Ashes, plus Megadeth, Wilco, Marc Ford, Umphrey's McGee and Dimmu Borgir

156 SOUNDCHECK

Marshall JVM410 head, Victoria Regal II combo, MXR Distortion III pedal and Gibson Les Paul Classic Custom electric guitar

160 Playing the Market

The inside scoop on vintage gear

160 Buzz Bin Display and Play

Metalhead guitar display

162 New EQ What's new and cool in the world of gear

166 The Hole Truth Martin OMC

Red Birch Sustainable Wood Series acoustic-electric guitar

168 Tech Education

How to enslave a nonmaster volume amp

178 A VULGAR DISPLAY OF POWER

A complete overview of Machine Head guitarist Phil Demmel's live rig

TRANSCRIPTIONS

BASS LINES INCLUDED:

119 "COLONY OF BIRCHMEN" by Mastodon

124 "SPANISH CASTLE MAGIC" by Jimi Hendrix

129 "ENEMY" by Godsmack

134 "SHAMEFUL" by Atreyu

140 "NOVEMBER RAIN" by Guns N' Roses

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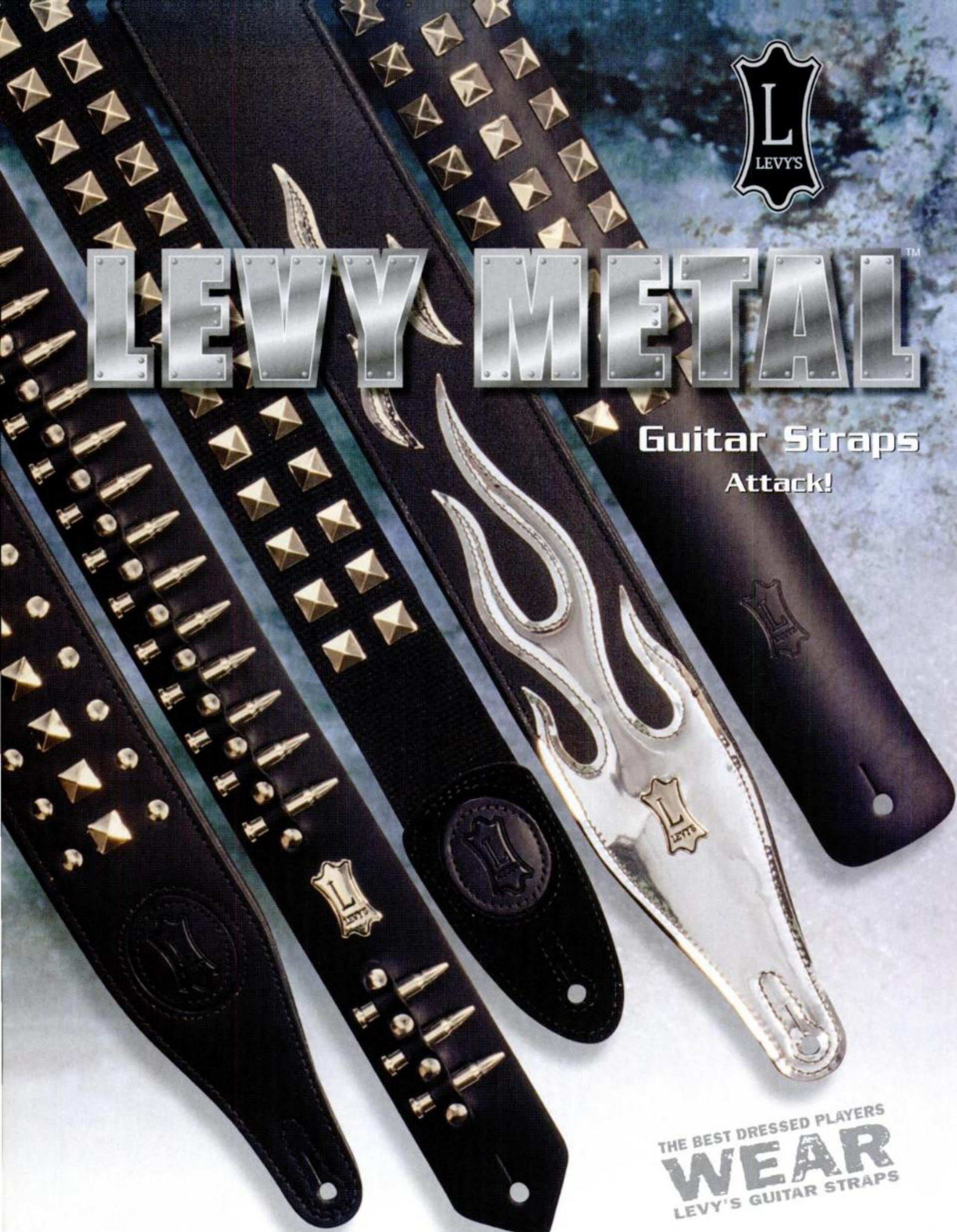
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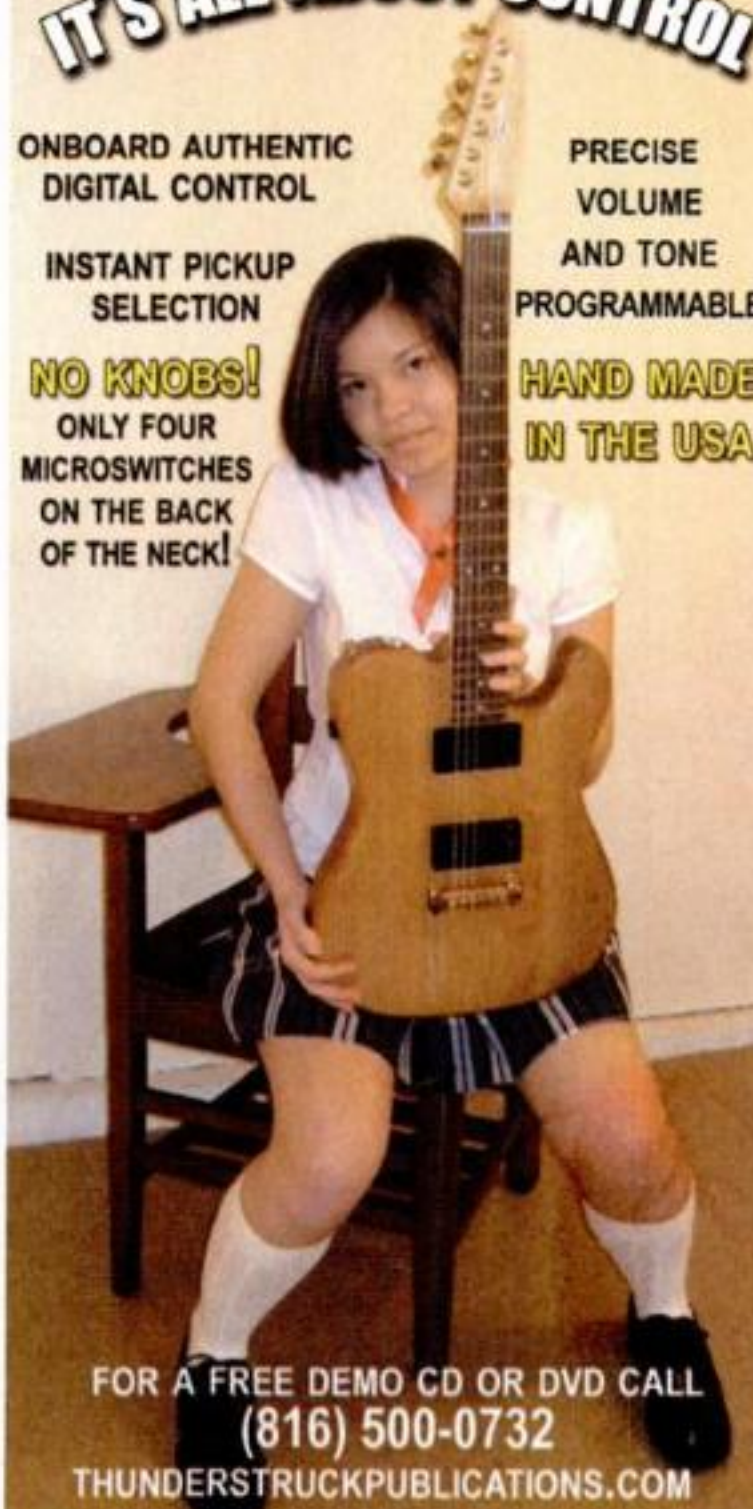
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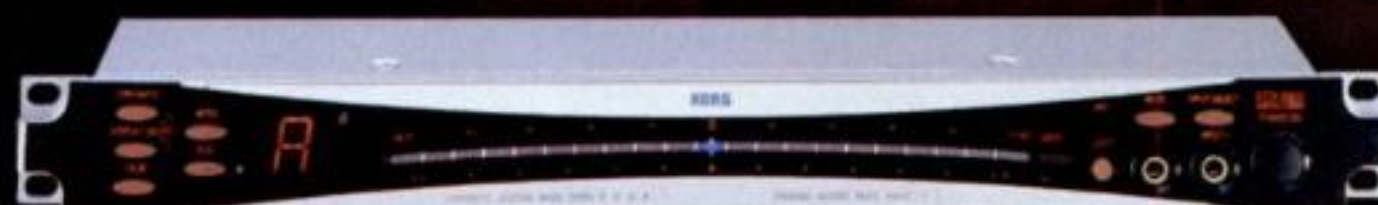
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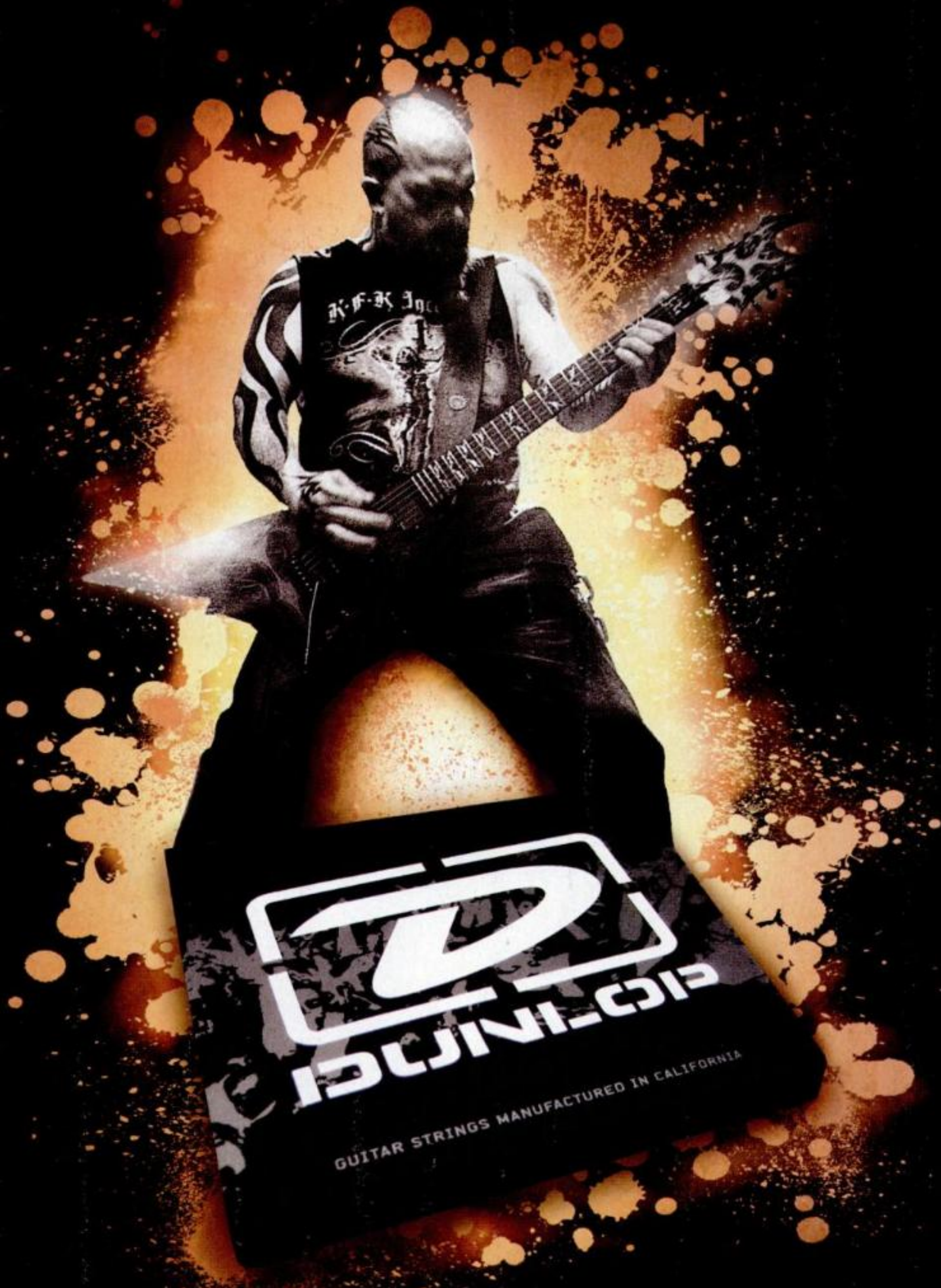
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JULY 2007

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IT'S HARD TO believe, but it's been almost three years since *Guitar World* began incorporating a CD-ROM into its packaging. While some of our initial discs were a little wobbly in terms of quality and content, we've steadily improved our offerings. Over the past year, many of our discs have been downright unbeatable and unbelievable.

Take this month's disc, for example. What would you pay to have Slash, Joe Satriani, John Petrucci and Paul Gilbert give you private lessons? More than \$7.99, I'd bet. Well, this month's CD-ROM gives you just that, and much, much more. The *Guitar World* disc is a technologi-

cal windfall for you, our reader. And the good news is, we're not stopping there.

As we announced last issue, *Guitar World* has relaunched its website, guitarworld.com. If you haven't had a chance to visit it, you

don't know what you're missing. In addition to the latest guitar news, the site features exclusive new lessons, video interviews and a slew of fresh licks by superstars like Kerry King, Shadows Fall, Alex Lifeson and shredder supreme Ritchie Kotzen. Additionally, guitarworld.com houses an incredible archive of hot gear reviews and—speaking of hot—a smokin' gallery of the world-famous girls of *Guitar World*.

But perhaps one of the coolest new digital-based projects we've created is at the news-

stands right now. *Guitar World* magazine, in partnership with Jimi Hendrix's family, has just released *Axis: Bold As Love: The Ultimate Guitar Experience*, an instructional DVD tribute to the Jimi Hendrix Experience's sophomore release and one of the most influential albums of all-time. Recorded at Hendrix's Electric Lady Studios in New York City, this unprecedented DVD features more than three hours of lessons that show you how to play every song on the classic album, including such masterpieces as "Little Wing" and "Castles Made of Sand." The DVD also contains a 10-minute documentary that features an interview with Axis audio engineer Eddie Kramer and rare footage of Jimi in the studio.

Web sites, DVDs, CD-ROMs... Did we mention that the magazine you have in your hands is pretty cool, too?

—BRAD TOLINSKI
Editor-in-Chief



GT PROFILE

Zakk Wylde: Don't get between him and his tone

WHAT HE'S DONE: At age 20, he grabbed one of the most coveted positions in rock, landing as Ozzy Osbourne's guitar player. In addition to his many albums and tours with Ozzy, Zakk is equally well known for his brutal playing as the frontman for his own band, Black Label Society.

WHAT HE'S DOING: BLS released their latest album "Shot To Hell" in 2006, and have been touring non-stop in support ever since.

WHAT HE USES: Zakk insists on GT tubes in his Marshall JCM800 signature amps, and he's bought them from the beginning. He says that his GT6550R Power Tubes and GTECC835, GT12AX7C and GT12AX7M Preamp Tubes are critical to his much admired tone both in studio and on tour.

WHAT HE SAYS: "Why would anyone use anything but Groove Tubes? Gimme a Les Paul and a Marshall packed with GT's, and that's it. That's the sound you need. End of story."

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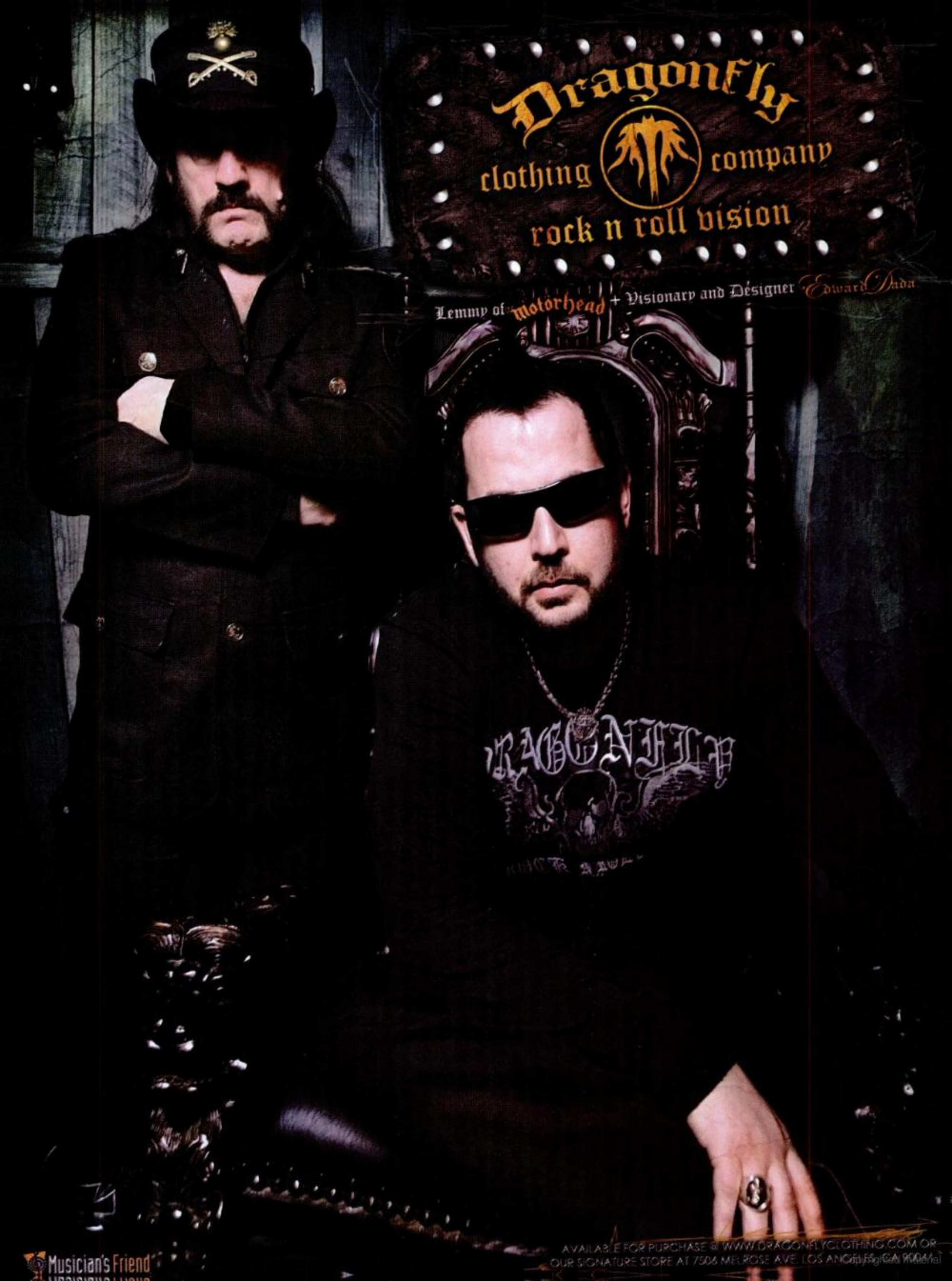
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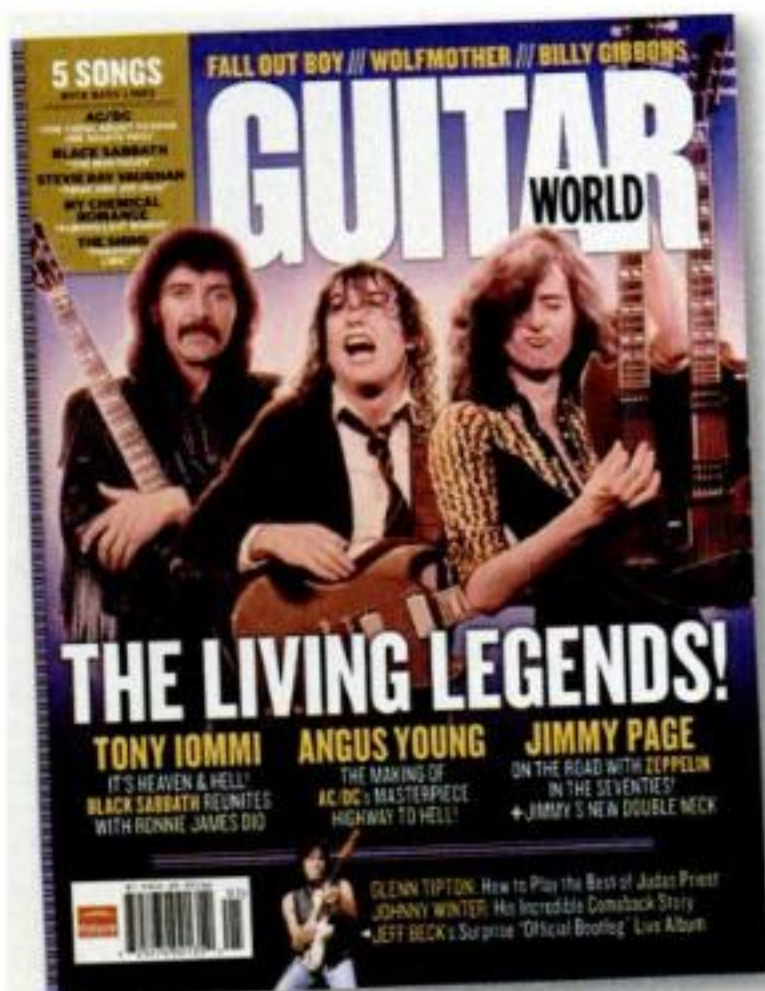
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MAY SHOWERS

Your story on the making of AC/DC's *Highway to Hell* [May 2007] was great. I love going back in time to my rock and roll birth and getting a behind-the-scenes look at an album that slapped me across the face—as well as gave me my first school suspension for wearing a concert shirt with the word “hell” on it! Good job, *Guitar World*!

—Scot Rudd
via email



ANYTIME I SEE A LESSON WITH ANDY ALEDORT ON THE GUITAR WORLD CD-ROM, I BUY THE ISSUE. I DON'T EVEN CARE WHAT HE'S PLAYING.
—MARK

The May 2007 was awesome! I love all three living guitar legends: Page, Iommi and Angus Young. Maybe next time you do a Living Legends feature you could spotlight Metallica, Judas Priest and Motörhead.

—John B.
Aurora, IL

DANDY ANDY

I just wanted to say how much I appreciate Andy Aledort's video lessons on the *Guitar World* CD-ROM. Anytime I see a lesson with Andy on the disc, I buy the issue—I don't even care what he's playing or teaching. If he's breaking something down, it's worth my money.

—Mark
via email

ALL FILLER, NO KILLER

I've been having trouble listening to music lately, and your June issue made it clear why. Effects, processing, synthesizing, speeding up, slowing down, sticky stuff on tape heads, digitized instruments, makeup, tattoos and everybody trying to look oh-so-cool. The Beatles, who I used to love, even fell prey to altering their actual sound so much they couldn't play their own music. That's just so sad. Will I throw out my Adrian Belew and Pink Floyd CDs? I think not. But much

music is so processed and artificial, it's now like a Twinkie. Yeah, one may taste okay every now and then, but in your heart you know it's mostly crap.

—McGeorgeRL
via email



HELLBILLY DELUXE

Great HELLYEAH article in the June issue! Its good to see Vinnie Paul back on the scene—and the new HELL-YEAH music is awesome.

—guitarman
via guitarworld.com/forums

...AND VERY POPULAR WITH OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY

The Girls of *Guitar World* online photo gallery? Stupid and sexist.

—p8guitar
via guitarworld.com/forums

DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH

GUITAR WORLD READERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



"FORD" MANDALAY

AGE 49
HOMETOWN Los Angeles, CA
GUITARS Gretsch G5120 hollowbody, Fender Jimmie Vaughan Stratocaster, Fender Jaguar HH Custom
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING "You Are My Sunshine," "Red River Valley," "All Along the Watchtower"
GEAR I MOST WANT Six-foot-tall Russian supermodel



ALFIE LLANOS

AGE 26
HOMETOWN Sydney, Australia
GUITARS Ibanez RG742-DXFX, Mexican Fender Telecaster, Ibanez TCY10, Talman acoustic
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING Metallica's "Master of Puppets" and "Fade to Black"
GEAR I MOST WANT Mesa/Boogie Single Rectifier, Ibanez RG2610E Prestige



YASMIN HOFER

AGE 14
HOMETOWN Ulm, Germany
GUITARS Ibanez JEM 555, Cox LTD
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING "For the Love of God" by Steve Vai and Van Halen's "Eruption"
GEAR I MOST WANT Mesa Rectifier Roadster



BUD BLADEZ

AGE 20
HOMETOWN Melbourne, Australia
GUITARS Gibson Smartwood Studio, Jackson Randy Rhoads
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING "Damaged" by John 5 and originals by my band, Million Dollar Whores
GEAR I MOST WANT Any George Lynch Signature ESP, Randall V2

Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to defendersofthefait@guitarworld.com. And pray!

RECENT READER TRANSCRIPTION REQUESTS

- UFO "Doctor Doctor"
- LAMB OF GOD "Laid to Rest"
- THE BLACK CROWES "High Head Blues"
- TED NUGENT "Stranglehold"
- RADIOHEAD "Paranoid Android"
- NECROPHAGIST "Symbiotic in Theory"
- GUNS N' ROSES "Rocket Queen"
- FRANK MARINO & MAHOGANY RUSH "Dragonfly"
- HELLYEAH "Goddamn"
- JUDAS PRIEST "Beyond the Realms of Death"

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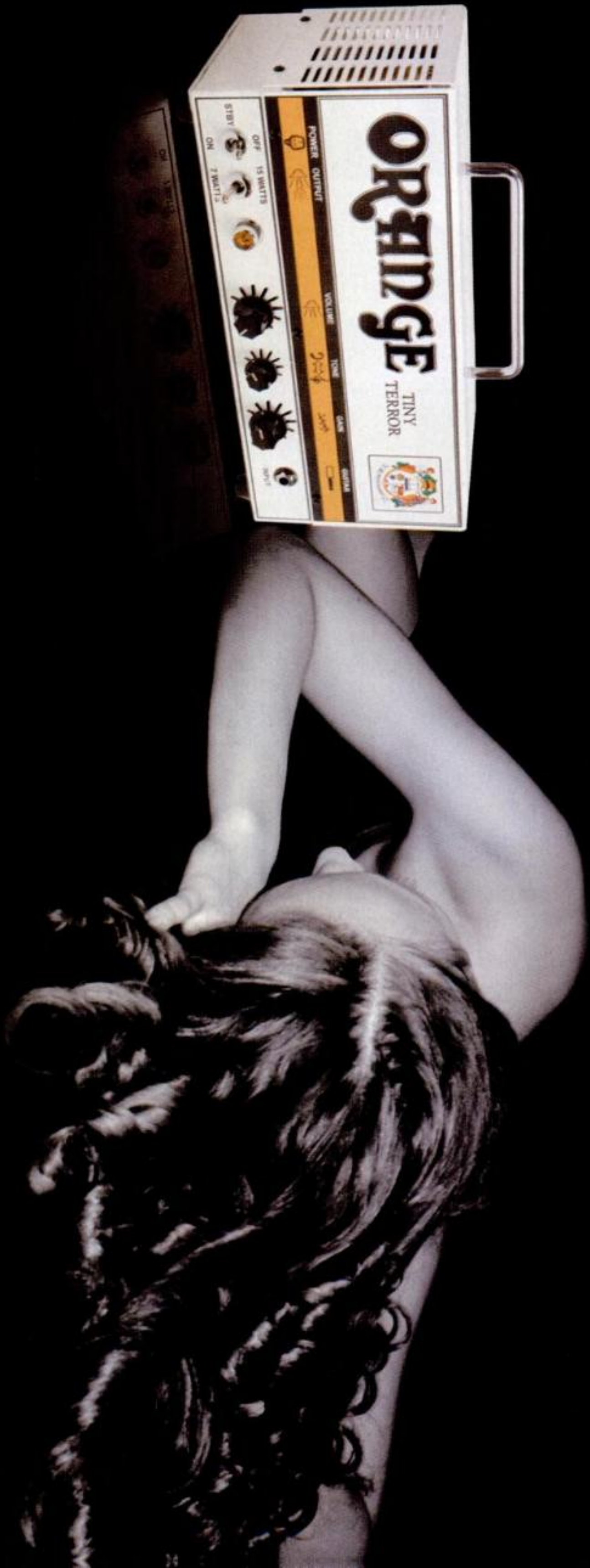
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INSIDE INQUIRER 34 SETLIST 36 DEAR GUITAR HERO 38 REVIEWS 40 PROFILES & MORE!!!

TOO POOPED FOR POP

Atreyu keep production values down and dirty on their forthcoming major-label debut.



By JONAH BAYER

Photograph by TRAVIS SHINN

ATREYU, EVERYONE'S favorite glamcore quintet, are currently holed up with producer John Feldmann (the Used, Story of the Year) at his home in Bel-Air, California, recording the follow-up to 2006's *A Death-Grip on Yesterday*. If you thought the walls of stacks, the epilepsy-inducing light show and the triple-kick drum attack featured on the group's recent tour were over the top, just wait until you hear how the band's major-label debut is shaping up.

"It's definitely going to be a bigger-sounding record, with way more bells and whistles," guitarist Dan Jacobs explains. He adds that he and coguitarist Travis Miguel will work more interactively, soloing together and playing more leads. "In every department, we're just trying to step it up a little bit and see what we can do."

The guitarists add that the as-yet-untitled album will feature plenty of shredding as well as the decidedly unshredderlike tones of acoustic guitars, keyboards and ambient atmospherics. "I'm a sucker for really ethereal effect-driven guitars, so they'll definitely be a lot of that on the record, too," Miguel says.

While Feldmann has a reputation for creating slick pop albums, Miguel insists the new effort won't be over-produced. "Personally, I was kind of second-guessing [using Feldmann], because his productions tend to be a little poppier," says Miguel. "But he knows where we come from, so I don't think he's going to change us at all. The guy knows what he's doing, so he's not going to try to polish a turd."

GUITARS (Jacobs) ESP LTD D1600 Signature model (Miguel) ESP LTD TM600 Signature model

AMPS (Jacobs) Marshall JCM800 and Jubilee anniversary heads with 4x12 cabinets; (Miguel) Rivera Knucklehead Tré head with Rivera 4x12 cabinets

EFFECTS (Jacobs) Boss Overdrive, DigiTech chorus, DigiTech delay, Boss wah, Boss Noise Suppressor; (Miguel) Line 6 DLT, Line 6 MM4, Line 6 FM4, Boss Reverb, Morley Bad Horsie wah, Boss Noise Suppressor

STRINGS Dean Markley Signature Series



Jacobs (left) and Miguel



“IT'S A BIGGER-SOUNDING RECORD, WITH WAY MORE BELLS AND WHISTLES.”

— DAN JACOBS

TUNE-UPS *news+notes*

RE-ARRANGED

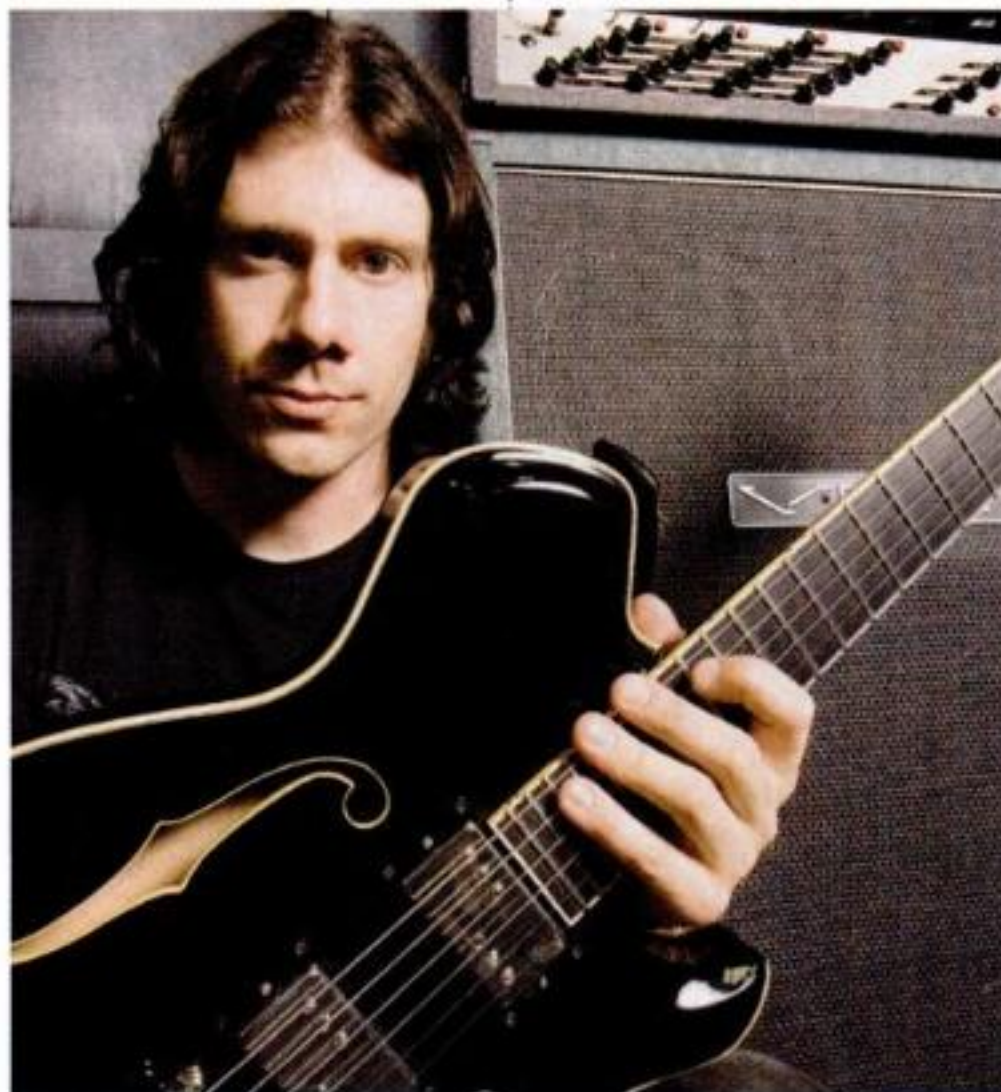
Former Limp Bizkit guitarist Wes Borland returns with Black Light Burns.

By **JON WIEDERHORN**
Photograph by **ROBIN LAANANEN**

WES BORLAND was fed up with having bandmates.

Unable to get along with Limp Bizkit frontman Fred Durst, he'd left the group—twice. His failure to find the right musicians for his post-Bizkit bands Eat the Day and the Damning Well put an end to those projects as well.

So in 2004, Borland decided to write a bunch of songs on his own and record them at home with a few friends: former-Nine Inch Nails guitarist Danny Lohner (who also produced and played bass), Telefon Tel Aviv keyboardist Josh Eustis and studio drummer extraordinaire Josh Freese. "I just realized that my close friends are the greatest musicians I know," says Borland. "So when they weren't doing something else, they'd record with me."



The resulting album, *Cruel Melody* (I Am: Wolfpack Records), was recorded in roughly 10 sessions held over a three-year period. Due June 5, it features a blend of gothic pop melo-

dies, industrial textures and metal riffs that at times resemble a hybrid of Nine Inch Nails, the Cure and Garbage.

After the creatively limiting nu-metal of Limp Bizkit, Borland feels excited and liberated by Black Light Burns. "I have a lot more tools in my box, which I love. With Bizkit, sometimes I felt like I couldn't move. Now I can run anywhere I want."

Unfortunately, making an album with musicians from other bands makes playing out almost impossible. So for Black Light Burns' upcoming tour, Borland recruited guitarist Nick Annis and bassist Sean Fetterman—formerly with Turn of the Screw—and drummer Marshall Kilpatrick, previously with the Esoteric. Once the tour is completed, the guitarist plans to work with Kilpatrick on new material.

"We're already five songs into the next record," he says. "We're going to finish it on the road and release it in 2008. This is my new band, not a side project." 🌟

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ABOUT HIS GUITAR!



KERRY KING

"This is a replica of my B.C. Rich signature V. The original got bled on while we were making the *Still Reigning* live DVD. I thought that made the guitar pretty important, so I gave it to the Hard Rock Café to put on display. But since I liked the guitar, I had a replica made. The tribal design was done by the guy who did the tribal tattoos on my arms, and I liked that continuity."

JIMMY HUBBARD (KING GUITAR)

BETCHA CAN'T PLAY THIS!

BILL HUDSON *of Cellador*

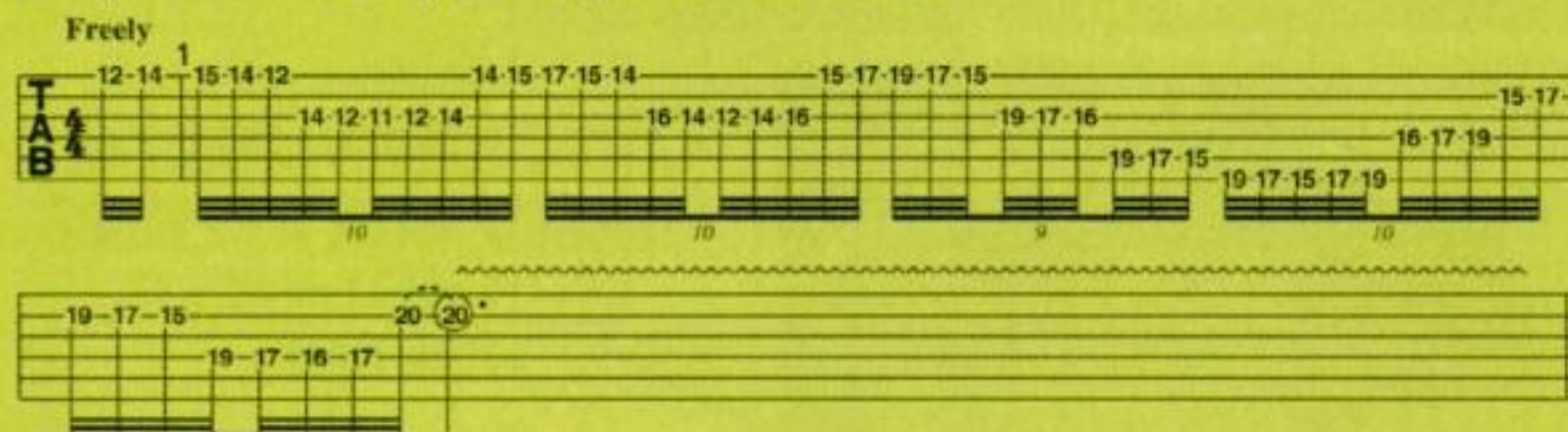
"THIS IS A string-skipping run in G major—or E natural minor—that's based on three-notes-per-string scale fragments played high on the neck with alternate picking. It involves a few small position shifts that are fairly obvious and not very difficult to perform. The

challenge is to pick all the notes cleanly. Start out slowly, and gradually increase the tempo while you try to make your picking strokes as small and efficient as possible. When skipping over a string, try to just barely clear it without making the pick 'jump' higher than necessary." 🌟



Visit Bill's MySpace page:
www.myspace.com/billhudsongtr

Tune gtr. down one half step (low to high: E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭).



PICK OF THE MONTH



SLASH
of Velvet Revolver



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TUNE-UPS *stage coach* The set lists of the stars

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INQUIRER

Tom Gabriel Fischer of CELTIC FROST

By RANDY HARWARD

What inspired you to play guitar?

I was raised in a very musical family. We had a very good record collection, and from the time I was six years old, my mother left me alone for weeks on end while she smuggled diamonds and watches all over the world. Records were my only company for many years.

What was your first guitar?

Oh, Jesus, some really cheap thing. I had formed a band, and we couldn't find a guitar player, so I was forced

to play guitar. I had no money to my name, so I bought a really cheap guitar that had the weight of balsa wood.

What was the first song you learned?

A song I wrote myself. I tried to copy Black Sabbath riffs off records, but I never learned an entire song. The first entire song I played was one I wrote myself.

Even had an embarrassing onstage moment?

I have a million of them. When you

play all over the world, it's inevitable. So of course, it happens frequently.

What is your favorite piece of gear?

Probably the Ibanez Tube Screamer, in its various incarnations. I wouldn't be able to play what I play without that.

Got any advice for young players?

It might sound like a cliché, but don't copy other people. Maybe it's okay to do it when you're first learning, but as soon as you can handle the guitar, try to be original. ●



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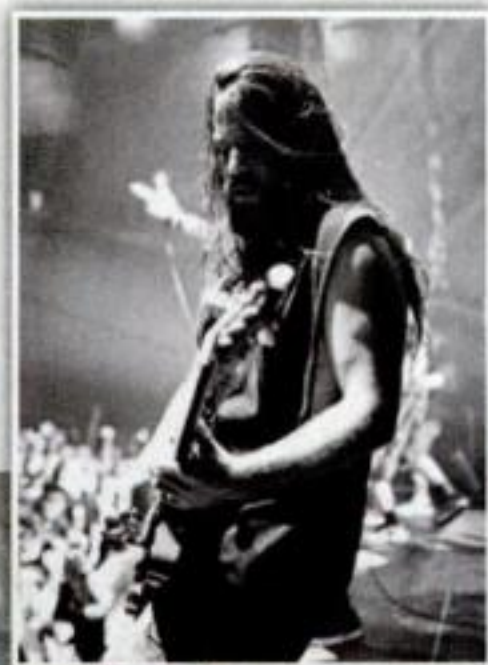
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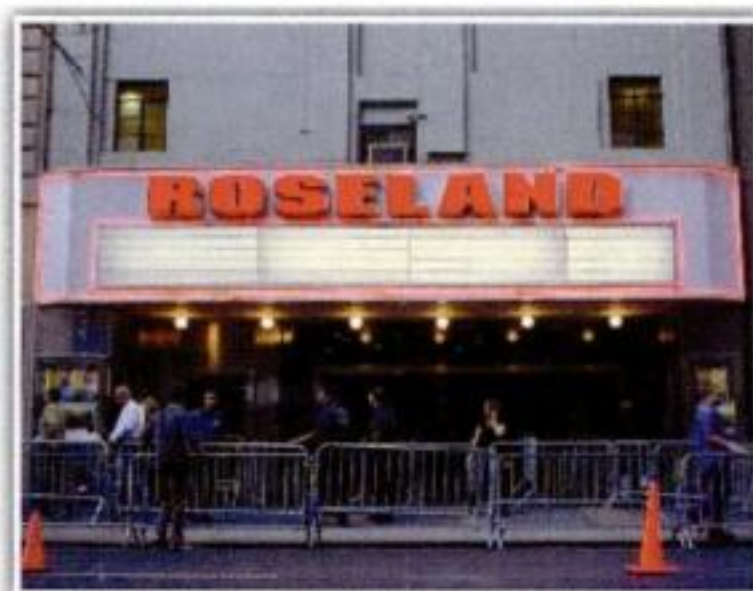
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TUNE-UPS *stage coach* The set lists of the stars



MARK MORTON of *Lamb of God* ROSELAND, NY • FEBRUARY 22, 2007

Interview by **NICK BOWCOTT**
Photo by **JIMMY HUBBARD**



DUNLOP CRY BABY "I keep this one up front by my monitors. Ain't nobody working my Cry Baby but me! I use this on the solo for 'Pathetic' and in a couple other places."

"Recently, I started using an MXR Overdrive and Phaser on my leads to make them cut a little better. Larry Clubb, my tech, made the pedal board and does the switching for me behind the backline."

"It's pretty much a total blackout in between song blocks, and our light guy is fog machine crazy, so Larry and I live by flashlights and glow tape."

"My secret weapon. This makes everything sound better. This counts as 'warming up,' right?"

"One of my favorite tunes in the set. The riffs are fun, and there's a cool little harmonic minor run at the end of the solo that I dig."

"We've been opening with this lately. It's a fast-riff extravaganza that I should warm up for but don't."

Hourglass
Rise
Walk With Me in Hell
Ruin
Pathetic
Palaces
Descending
More Time To Kill
Blacken The Cursed Sun
D - Bloodletting
11th Hour
Something to Die For
D - Laid To Rest
Vigil
D - Redneck
Black Label

"I switch the tuning of the high string for a few songs. It's usually tuned down to D, but for the second block I tune it up to E."

"We've been ending with this forever. We don't do encores. The fans know that when this one hits, it's their last chance to destroy everything in their path."

MXR EVH PHASE 90 "This thing makes solos sear. It's dialed back a bit so that it's a relatively subtle effect. It's used only on leads, but every once in a while Larry will start hittin' the bottle back there and getting 'phaser happy.'"

MXR GT-OD "This is a cool little pedal. It's got tons of saturation available, but we turn it way down and use it pretty much just for a boost."

TU-2 TUNER
"Pretty basic here. You gotta be in tune."

JOHN 5

[ROB ZOMBIE/SOLO ARTIST]



"Speed and tone are the most important things I look for. I love how warm and rich all the amp models sound. It's easy to program and it changes patches faster than anything I've ever used. Zoom is amazing."



Check out John 5's new album, "THE DEVIL KNOWS MY NAME" available now!

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TUNE-UPS *dear guitar hero!*

JON DONAIS & MATT BACHAND SHADOWS FALL

*They're rated among the best modern thrash guitarists, and their band has just released its sixth album, **Threads of Life**. But what Guitar World readers really want to know is...*

How do you guys write your songs? Do you jam together, or do you each write parts at home and bring them in completed?

—Jerome

JON It happens both ways. Sometimes I'll have a full song written, but a lot of times I'll bring my individual riffs to Matt's home studio.

MATT I'll hook up some drum-machine rhythms just to get a basic arrangement down. Then once we have something strong, we'll bring it to the rest of the band to round off the edges.

Do have any advice on how to harmonize guitar parts?

—Vishal Sahni, Meridian, ID

JON I like to record the original part and loop it; then I'll try out a bunch of licks on top of it until I work it out. You don't always have to use theory. There are a lot of times when I'll know the note is "wrong," but it's what my ear wants to hear. Often, I'll think that something shouldn't work right because it's not in the right scale, but everyone will love it.

Guitar chops seem to be making their way into modern metal and metalcore. Do you agree? If so, what are you feelings about this trend? Does competition help challenge you to get better?

—Josh Holdsworth

JON Definitely. When you see people out there kicking ass, you want to get better. Watching guys like Nevermore's Jeff Loomis or my guitar teacher, Jimmy Bell, really challenges me. As far as solos being trendy, I think in the Eighties people were just trying to show off and it turned into the finger Olympics. I like solos that are part of the song, because if solos don't have soul or make you feel anything, what are they doing for the song? I think it's awesome that people are soloing, as long as today's stuff doesn't get to where people are abusing it, because that's what killed it in the first place.



Bachand (left) and Donais

What would you guys be doing if you weren't in Shadows Fall?

—Tim Carter

MATT I'd probably be stuck working at the mall forever. [laughs]

JON I probably would have stayed in college, but who knows? Actually, that's a nightmare I think about every day... 'cause in this business, it can end at any time. I don't even want to think about it!

Jon, you've said in past interviews you were never one to practice eight hours a day. Exactly how long do you practice?

—Allan Demesa

JON Right now, when I'm not on the road, I try to go two to three hours a day. I used to get the instructional videos with Paul Gilbert and Yngwie, but it never seemed "real" because it was on TV. I've never had a guitar teacher that pushed me as hard as Jimmy Bell does now. He tells me exactly what I need to change. That's been a huge kick in the ass as far as practicing goes, but I still would never practice eight hours a day. I'd go nuts.

What do you consider to be the biggest metal guitar cliché?

—Tyler Sneap

JON I hear metalcore people doing a lot of sweep arpeggios but not going anywhere after that. It sounds like these guys just bought a Rusty Cooley DVD and they learned a bunch of new sweeps. It's cool, but it seems like that's all they have, because when it comes to the solo they'll just do the sweeps instead of bending a note or adding some melody.

Do you think putting an album out on a major label has given you more room to be creative, or does the label try to push more of their ideas of what your sound should be?

—Jeff, Pontiac, MI

MATT When we were making *Threads of Life*, Atlantic had nothing to say; we just made the album we wanted to make. That was actually part of our deal when we signed. Our most important point was that we wanted full creative control. We got really lucky, because that's exactly what we got.

Take us through your live gear setup, including guitars and strings.

—Kenny Snyder

JON Washburn Face Eraser guitar, DR Tite-Fit strings and Dunlop Tortex Sharp Picks, 1.35mm. As far as effects, it's a wah, Maxon OD808 overdrive, Maxon AD999 Analog Delay and Boss NS-2 Noise Suppressor. I use a Krank Revolution head for my dirty tones and a Tech 21 Power Engine and Sansamp RBI preamp for my clean tone.

MATT For guitar, I use my signature model Ibanez MBM1; DR Extra-Life strings, .011 gauge; Krank Revolution heads with Rocktron Gainiac 2 pre-amp; and a Rocktron Super C Noise Reduction. For clean tone I'm running BBE Sonic Maximizer, a Rocktron Xpression [effects processor] unit for chorus effects and the same Tech 21 pre and power amp that Jon uses.

“**IF SOLOS DON'T HAVE SOUL OR MAKE YOU FEEL ANYTHING, WHAT ARE THEY DOING FOR THE SONG?**”
—JON DONAIS

**I pulled into Nazareth,
was feelin' about half past dead
I just need some place
where I can lay my head**

– searching for inspiration, he looked inside his D-28 and found Nazareth, 1968



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TUNE-UPS *reviews*

WIN, LOSE OR DRAW

The Used, Funeral for a Friend and From Autumn to Ashes attempt to transcend their screamo roots, with varying results.

By JONAH BAYER

THE USED

Lies for the Liars
WARNER BROS.

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND

Tales Don't Tell Themselves
ATLANTIC

FROM AUTUMN TO ASHES

Holding a Wolf by the Ears
VAGRANT

TRADITIONALLY, evolution takes millions of years and is achieved through subtle changes to an organism's molecular makeup. However, if you're a screamo band, you've generally got about one record to make that transition. The three acts here are acutely aware of this fact and are struggling with a natural biological urge to adapt, because they know better than anyone that the results could determine whether each band thrives or implodes.

By far the most popular of these three acts is the Used, who, alongside acts like Thursday, helped define the Summer of Screamo back in 2002. While the band didn't make any decisive sonic shifts with 2004's *In Love and Death*, on *Lies for the Liars*, the Used inexplicably supplement their anthemic sound with NIN-inspired industrial flourishes, superfluous orchestras and waltzing woodwinds. Far from enhancing the songs, these additions serve as distractions.

Even worse, the Used seem to be trying to emulate their former protégés in My Chemical Romance (check out the arty "The Bird and the Worm"), falling back on studio trickery to cover up their lack of innovation. Sure, the vitriolic "Liar Liar (Burn in Hell)" will get the pit moving, but if frontman Bert McCracken wants to stay at the top of the pack, he's going to have to do better than passing off second-grade taunts as lyrics.


The English imports in Funeral for a Friend go a far safer route with *Tales Don't Tell Themselves*, abandoning dual-guitar harmonies and guttural vocals for shimmering guitar lines and a pop sensibility that has far

more in common with Unwritten Law than it does Underoath. However, while the post-hardcore grooves on conceptual tracks like "Part 2: Open Water" evoke late-Nineties pioneers like Quicksand, the album lacks the edge of the band's previous material. *Tales Don't Tell Themselves* has gems, including the impossibly catchy single "Into Oblivion (Reunion)" and the midtempo "One for the Road." But the songs sound markedly watered down in comparison to the group's 2005's major-label debut, *Hours*.

Ironically, the strongest release here comes from the band that has changed its sound the least—From Autumn to Ashes. *Holding a Wolf*



by the Ears could be post-screamo's first official masterpiece. Although the band's longtime frontman, Ben Perri, isn't present, drummer Francis Mark has stepped up to sing, scream and lay down the beats, and he does a first-rate job.

In fact, tracks like "On the Offensive" manage to incorporate galloping guitars, tasteful single-note lines and huge choruses without making it sound forced or formulaic. "I would never steal from you or any of your friends," Mark sweetly sings just seconds before a brutal breakdown erupts on the aforementioned track. Maybe not, but it couldn't hurt FATA's peers to steal a move or two from them. 



MEGADETH

United Abominations

ROADRUNNER
Say what you will about Dave Mustaine being born again—his search for faith seems to have helped him rediscover his artistic strengths. *United Abominations* is packed with angular, melodic thrash riffs and jugular-ripping solos, the like of which Megadeth haven't exhibited since 1990's *Rust in Peace*. Songs like "Washington Is Next!" and "Gears of War" are paradoxically confrontational and inviting, and a crunchier remake of 1994's "A Tout Le Monde (Set Me Free)" with Lacuna Coil's Cristina Scabbia takes Megadeth's softest number to a new level of ferocity. United we burn.
—Jon Wiederhorn



WILCO

Sky Blue Sky

NONESUCH
Some Wilco fans bristled when the news broke that free-jazz guitarist Nels Cline had joined the ever-evolving group. But Cline always possessed a melodic proclivity that sweetened his more adventurous string excursions. He's a perfect fit on the gently rambling *Sky Blue Sky*, Wilco's best record in a decade. Cline's interplay with multi-instrumentalist Pat Sansone and frontman/guitarist Jeff Tweedy is intricate and pretty (the late-Sixties-era Grateful Dead-inspired "You Are My Face"), and when he steps into the spotlight, he does so judiciously ("Side with Seeds").
—Meredith Ochs



MARC FORD

Weary and Wired

BLUES BUREAU INTERNATIONAL
Ex-Black Crowes guitar-slinger Marc Ford's second solo album is a cock-rock freak-out—a fat-toned fuzz-and-slide-soaked flashback to the days when the MC5 and Humble Pie ruled the blues 'n' boogie roost. His high-tension playing ripples with drama, from the monolithic opening chords of the Neil Young-like ballad "Smoke Signals" to the Memphis groove instrumental "Greasy Chicken." Sure, Ford sings acoustic-based love songs and plays sweet Stratty blues on "The Other Side," but this disc is truly about his unrestrained world-class electric-guitar-hero sounds and soloing.
—Ted Drozdowski



UMPHREY'S MCGEE

The Bottom Half

SCI
Every album of sloppy seconds should be as generous and rewarding as this magnificent improv-rock sextet's extended postscript to last year's *Safety in Numbers*. Disc one consists of completed tracks that didn't fit *Safety*, and songs like "The Bottom Half" and "Higgins" hit new heights of accessible complexity. Effortlessly lethal guitarists Jake Cinninger and Brendan Bayliss, when not shredding onstage, also possess Steely Dan-caliber studio smarts. A bonus disc of song sketches and demos provides a revealing peak behind the velvet curtain.
—Richard Gehr



DIMMU BORGIR

In Sorte Diaboli

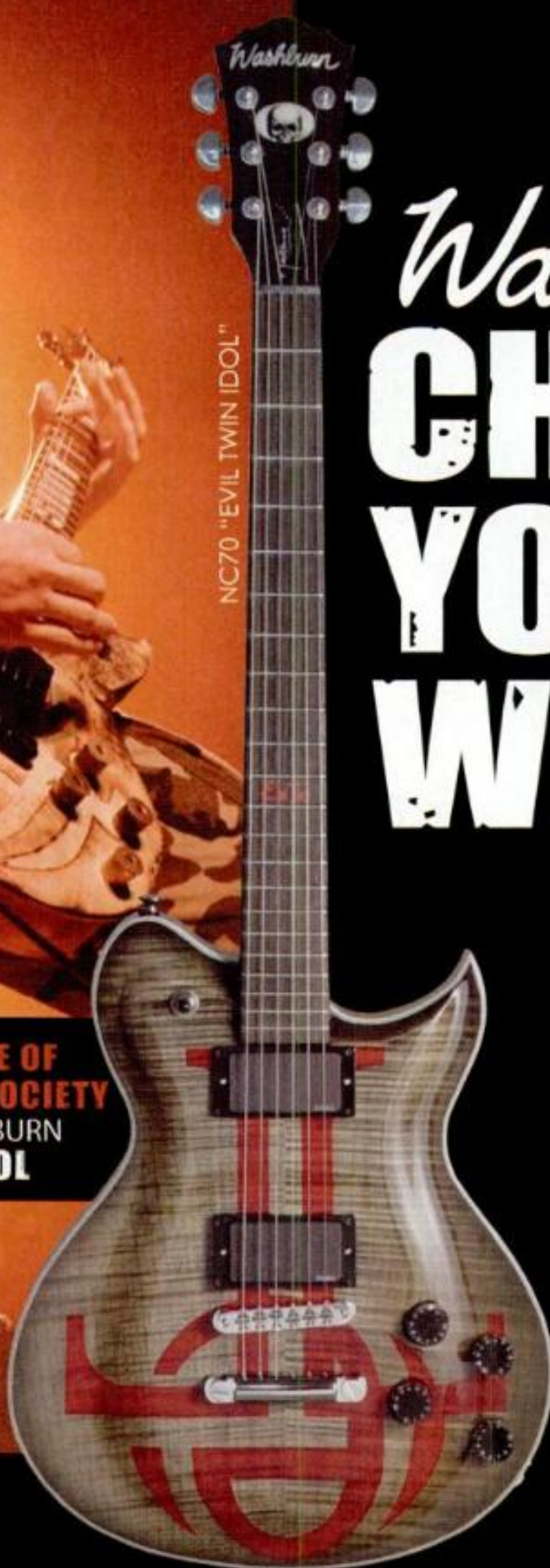
NUCLEAR BLAST
Dimmu Borgir's seventh studio album is an ambitious trek into controversial waters, complete with classical arrangements and a creepy-sounding horn section. The Norwegian sextet's carnal blast beats are often set aside to let the album's concept (a medieval apprentice priest questions his Christianity) unfold through soundtrack-like segues. Guitarist and main writer Silenoz provides plenty of quadruple-tracked riffing ("The Sinister Awakening," "The Chosen Legacy"). Some of the songs are evocative of Eighties thrash, but most display the exotic, illogical melodies of classic black metal.
—Martin Popoff

Washburn CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

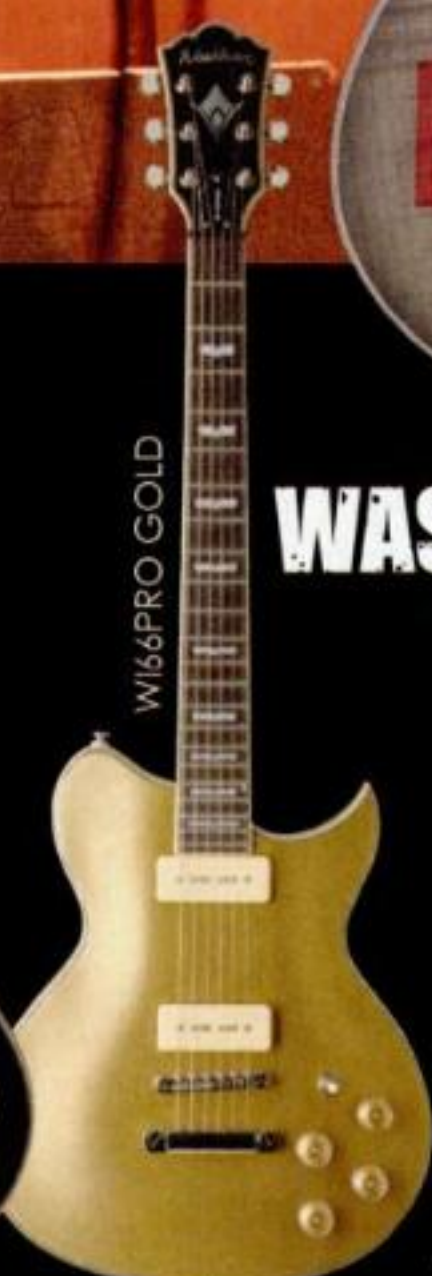
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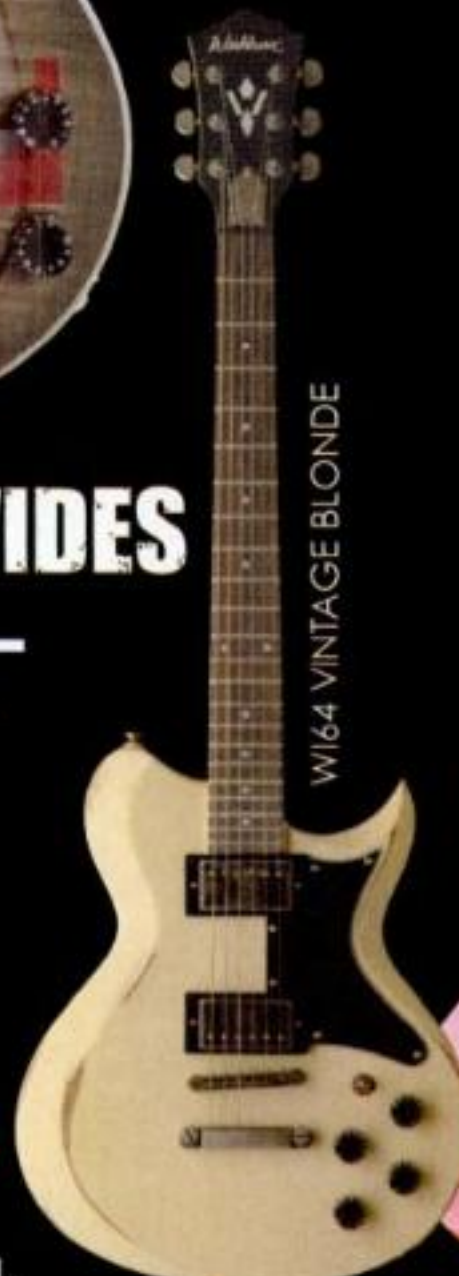
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TUNE-UPS *profiles*



Chislett (left) and Carden

THE ACADEMY IS...

Shirt Happens

By **BRIAN STILLMAN**
Photo by **KATRINA WITTKAMP**

MIKE CARDEN had just printed a load of T-shirts bearing his band's moniker when he received a letter from an attorney demanding that he group drop its name. "We were called the Academy," he explains, "and another band already had the same name." Carden didn't want to chuck his merch, so he quickly added the word "Is..." to the shirts, and the Academy Is... were born. "However, we couldn't fix them all," he says. "Now 'Academy' shirts are quite the hit on eBay."

Today, that other band and its lawyer have drifted into obscurity, while TAI have become rock and roll darlings. Their successful 2005 debut, *Almost Here*, led to high-profile tours with Fall Out Boy and All-American

Rejects, and in 2006 the Chicago-based group landed a coveted slot on the Vans Warped Tour.

Now, TAI—singer William Beckett, guitarists Carden and newcomer Michael Chislett, bassist Adam T. Siska and drummer Andy Mrotek—are partnering with Atlantic Records for their sophomore record, *Santi*. Working with producer Butch Walker (AAR, Hot Hot Heat) and Chislett, TAI have crafted an album that remains true to their pop-punk and indie roots. Carden says Walker encouraged spontaneity, allowing him to explore different musical styles and ideas. "Some bands say, 'Oh, that song doesn't fit in with this band,'" Chislett says of TAI's attitude. "But we're open to anything."

For a group of guys raised on indie shows held in basements and VFW halls, hooking up with a major

label should have raised concerns about holding onto their creative control, but Carden says it wasn't an issue. "It's not like the old days, where record labels told bands exactly what to do. They trust us, and they don't interfere." 🌟

GUITARS (Carden) Gibson ES 335; (Chislett) Gretsch White Falcon, Fender Jazzmaster

AMPS (Carden) Mesa/Boogie Lone Star; (Chislett) Goodsell, Vox AC30

EFFECTS (Carden) Line 6 Delay, Ibanez 808 Tube Screamer; (Chislett) Ernie Ball volume pedal, Ibanez 808 Tube Screamer, Boss DD-5 Delay, Boss DM-2 delay, Visual Sound Jekyll & Hyde

STRINGS (both) Ernie Ball

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DISC**

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DROPPING DAYLIGHT

ALBUM *Brace Yourself* (Octone)

THE SOUND Radio-friendly guitar rock...with piano!

HISTORY This Minneapolis four-piece began as a vehicle for Berklee-trained pianist Sebastian Davin's pop songs. Dropping Daylight's sound got a boost when guitarist/brother Seth joined, as evidenced by *Brace Yourself's* well-balanced mix of rocking guitars and upbeat melodic piano lines.

TALKBOX "We treat our instruments like someone we're pissed at," says Sebastian. "So we usually win over people who don't think the keyboard can kick ass."



THE SHOWDOWN

ALBUM *Temptation Come My Way* (Mono Vs Stereo)

THE SOUND Big, Black Label Society-inspired rhythm guitars crossed with Def Leppard-style production

HISTORY Rising out of the backwoods of Elizabethton, Tennessee, the five long-hairs in Showdown want to bring "masculine" back to the rock scene. Musically, that translates into chunky rhythm guitars, pseudo-shred solos...and a cover of Kansas' "Carry on Wayward Son."

TALKBOX "Whatever we do, we're going to do it to the best of our ability, which is always extreme, always killer," says vocalist David Bunton.

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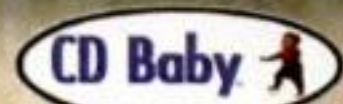
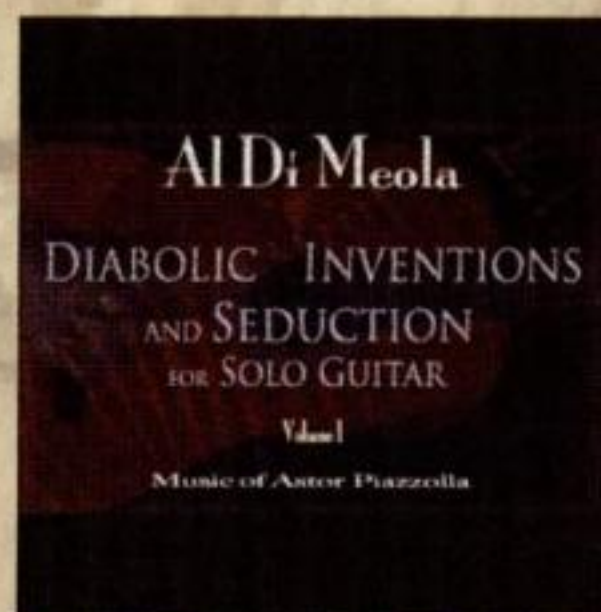
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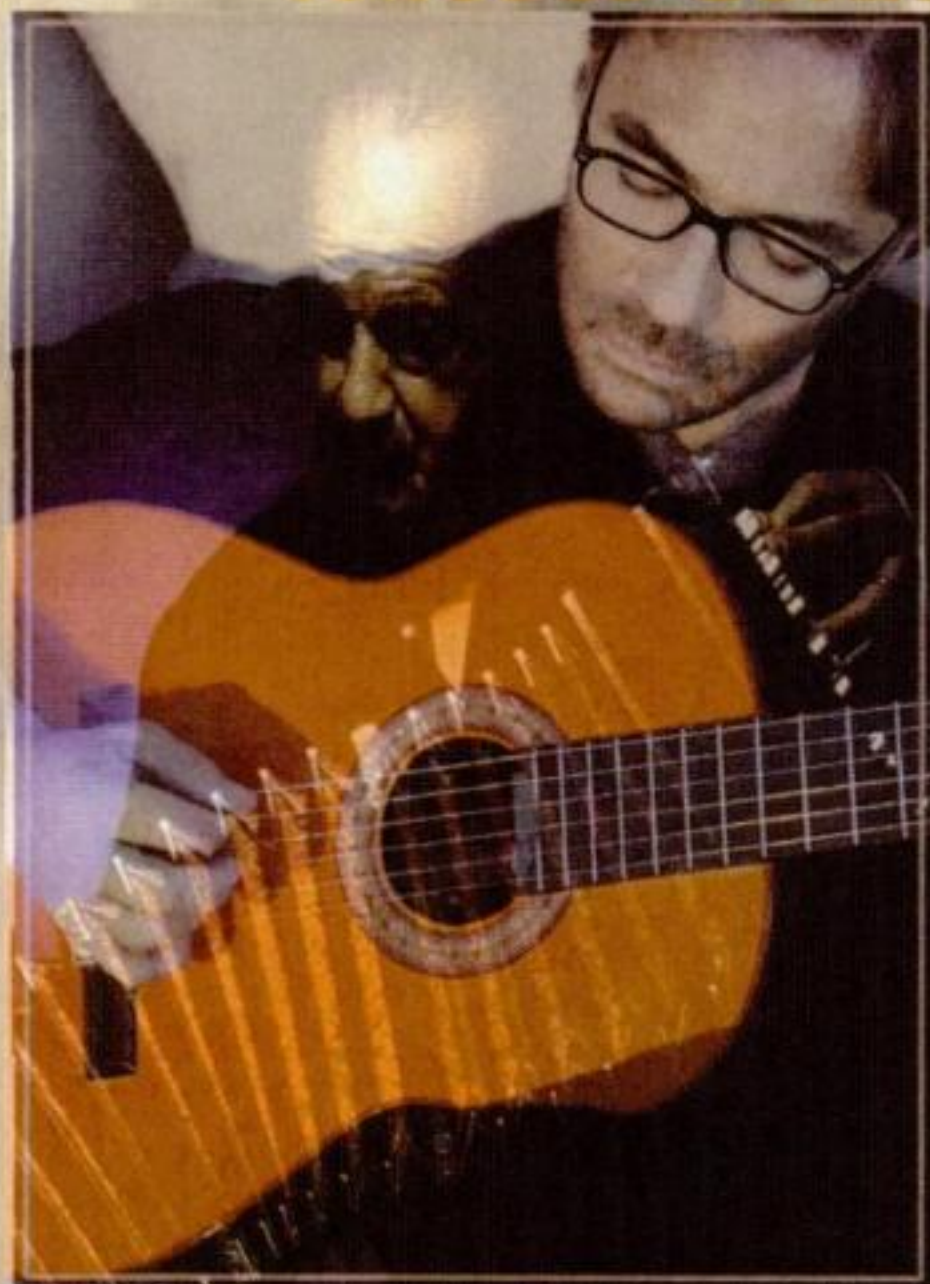
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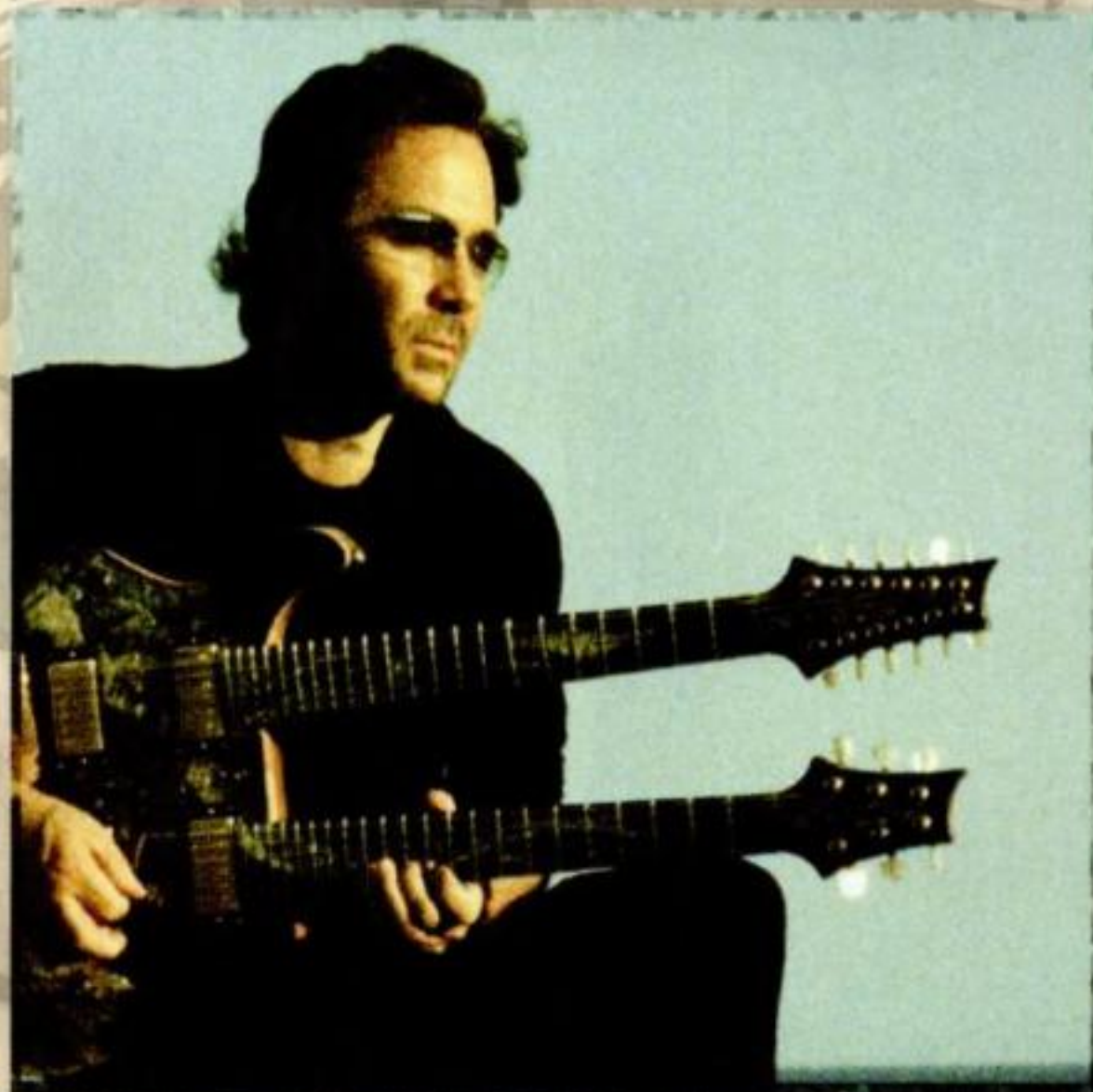
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*Greg Tribbet/Mudvayne -
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GTZ



THE G SPOT /// THE ANNUAL G3 SHREDFEST IS THE HOTTEST PLACE FOR DAZZLING DISPLAYS OF GUITAR VIRTUOSITY. THIS YEAR'S TOUR MATES — JOE SATRIANI, JOHN PETRUCCI AND PAUL GILBERT — SIT DOWN TO RAP ABOUT LICKS, TECHNIQUE AND THE ELUSIVE VIRTUE KNOWN AS "STYLE." /// BY ALAN DI PERNA



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF SCIORTINO

GUITAR WORLD  **47**

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HE WORLD'S GREATEST ANNUAL celebration of fretboard wizardry, the G3 Tour also offers ongoing proof that guitar heroes come in all shapes, sizes and sensibilities. This year's shredfest teams Joe Satriani, John Petrucci and Paul Gilbert, three guys you might never peg as friends or colleagues. Yet they have come together in steel-string brotherhood to present one of the hottest G3s in the tour's 11-year history.

¶ Tall, thin and these days sporting a wispy beard, Gilbert is a reluctant guitar hero. He burst on the scene in the Eighties with cult metal outfit Racer X and in 1988 went on to hit pay dirt with Mr. Big, sharing the instrumental spotlight with bass virtuoso Billy Sheehan while racking up several substantial chart hits. When Gilbert went solo in 1996, he decided to pursue a pop vocal direction, spurning several emphatic and lucrative offers to cut an instrumental disc. His rationale? ¶ "Girls will stop coming to my live shows. Girls like singing. I want to sing for them!"

But Gilbert has finally relented. This year he released his solo debut album, *Get Out of My Yard*, a happy marriage of Paul's astounding technique, harmonic inventiveness and quirky sense of humor. The jury is still out on how this will impact his female fan base.

In contrast, John Petrucci seems like a guy too obsessed with his fretboard ever to have noticed the existence of girls. His deep dedication to guitar mastery enabled him to defy the notion that prog-rock died out with wide lapels, daisy appliqués and other artifacts of the Seventies. He launched Dream Theater in 1985, and the band has since become the standard bearer of the prog metal scene.

"My band, Dream Theater; we're not a pop band," he points out. "You won't hear us on the radio. Yet we've managed to make an impact."

Well-knit and goateed, Petrucci is the quintessential regular guy from Long Island—friendly and possessed of a quiet humility that belies his status as a man whose lightning legato licks are venerated worldwide. After many successful years with Dream Theater and several collaborative side projects, Petrucci released his own solo instrumental debut CD, *Suspended Animation*, in 2005. The Berklee grad is a six-time veteran of G3.

And then there's Joe Satriani, G3's original architect, the godfather of shred,

“
WHEN I FIRST HEARD CHILDREN OF BODOM, I REALLY COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. I THOUGHT MY OLD BAND RACER X WERE THE HEAVIEST. I HEARD CHILDREN OF BODOM AND SAID, 'NO, THEY ARE THE HEAVIEST.'”
—PAUL GILBERT

guitar teacher to Steve Vai and Kirk Hammett—in short, the man who started it all. In 1986, Satch self-released his debut album, *Not of This Earth*, and—arriving long before the advent of MySpace or even the internet—he and his little homemade album created a groundswell of solo rock guitar instrumental frenzy.

"The term 'instrumental rock and roll' didn't mean anything when I started out," he says. Today, the genre's popularity is such that "when I go off on tour," Satch says, "I could keep going forever, if I wanted, from Bulgaria to the Philippines, Quebec City to Dubai."

Satriani's first-ever tour of India is chronicled on his new DVD *Satriani Live!* His technically dazzling yet highly melodic playing has placed albums like *Surfing with the Alien*, *The Extremist* and his latest studio recording, 2006's *Super Colossal*, alongside discs by classic rock icons like Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix. The long, dark hair of Satch's youth is long gone, eclipsed by the guitarist's now-familiar chrome dome, but his sterling musicianship reigns on.

Once it was possible to dismiss virtuoso instrumental rock as a subgenre, a niche market—something marginal to the mainstream and not really important in the big picture. But here in the MySpace era, there is no more big picture, just a constellation of niche markets. And as the importance of mainstream rock has withered, shred guitar is once again looming large, as witnessed by the virtuosity of metal newcomers like Children of Bodom, Trivium, Lamb of God and Dragonforce. All of which makes G3 more relevant than ever.

While Gilbert, Petrucci and Satriani are very different in their playing styles and personalities, a wondrous alchemy melds all three into a formidable force of nature when they join together for those end-of-the-night G3 jams to play classics by Hendrix, the Stones and others. This same chemistry is highly evident when the three musicians get together to talk guitar. In this *Guitar World* roundtable discussion, Paul, John and Joe weigh in on licks and lessons, composition, technique, their most dreaded guitar clichés, fave new gear, most valued new metal bands and that elusive musical virtue known as "style."



GUITAR WORLD An end-of-the-evening jam has become a G3 tradition. So what songs have you been jamming on this time?

JOE SATRIANI We started with a big list. Everybody brought in ideas. And we whittled it down to some Hendrix songs—"Purple Haze" and "Foxey Lady" and a Stones song that Paul brought in, "Jumpin' Jack Flash." We're also doing "Goin' Down" [*the Don Nix song popularized by the Jeff Beck Group*]. Some of the songs lend themselves to being total freak- [\(continued on page 92\)](#)

From left: Satriani, Petrucci and Gilbert



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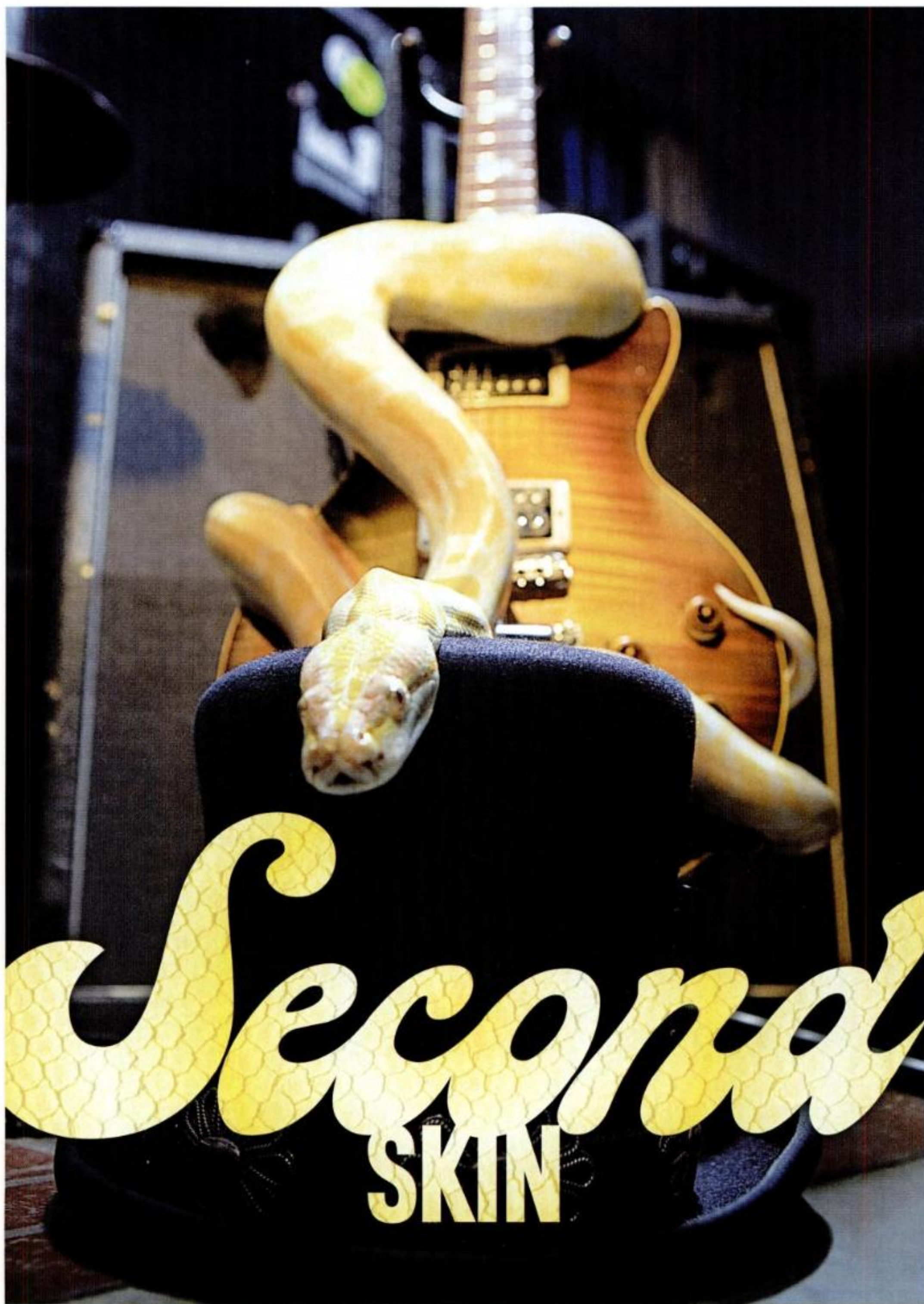
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**SLASH HAS
SHED HIS
DEMONS AND
CHANGED UP
HIS GUITAR
TONE. AND
ON VELVET
REVOLVER'S
NEW ALBUM,
LIBERTAD,
THE FORMER
GUNS N' ROSES
GUITARIST
SOUNDS
BETTER AND
BADDER THAN
EVER. WHO
SAYS THERE
ARE NO
SECOND ACTS?**

**BY RICHARD
BIENSTOCK**

**PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TRAVIS SHINN**





VEVE REVOLVER

all



CRAZY, BUT I STILL GET TURNED ON BY THE SAME STUFF

as when I was first starting out," Slash says, reflecting on his 20-year career as a recording artist. The guitarist has plenty to contemplate: his years of infamy with Guns N' Roses, his subsequent stints as the leader of his own ragtag bands, Slash's Snakepit and Slash's Blues Ball, and, more recently, his role in the star-studded rock band Velvet Revolver, which has just completed its second album, *Libertad* (RCA). The man formerly known as Saul Hudson is happy to acknowledge that, for all that has changed, his life feels very much the

same. ●●● "To this day it excites me, and almost naïvely so, to pick up a guitar and plug into an amp," he continues. "The whole process of coming up with a riff or a lick and then bringing it to fruition as a song; all of the writing, arranging and recording—I get off on that. And then when you finally play it for the world..." He looks away, as if searching the air for the right words, and then turns his head back with a smile. "That, to me, is the money shot." ●●● Slash leans back in his chair, pulls another cigarette from a box of Gitanes and lights up. It's an unseasonably cool March evening in Los Angeles, yet the balcony doors in his room at the Beverly Hills Hilton have been thrown wide open out of fear that he'll trigger every smoke alarm in the place. Slash is dressed in a motorcycle jacket, black T-shirt, skintight jeans and sneakers, his mane of curly black hair pulled back and topped with a grey tweed cap. Though it's nearing midnight, and we are seated indoors, he's wearing

a pair of mirrored aviator sunglasses. Despite decades of abusing his body in ways that would have killed a lesser man, or perhaps a small horse, Slash looks surprisingly fit and considerably more youthful than his 41 years, or his lifestyle, should allow. In fact, other than having filled out a bit, he doesn't look very different from the scrawny Sunset Strip street urchin who rose to worldwide guitar-god prominence all those years ago, back when he was too young to be served legally in a bar.

These days, the guitarist doesn't drink at all, having recently completed a stint in rehab. "It was a really positive experience," he allows, with a wry grin. It is yet another part of his life that has changed over these past few years. There was a time not too long ago when, despite releasing a couple of Snakepit records and popping up every so often for the odd guest spot, it seemed he would be forever inextricably linked to Guns N' Roses, that his every move would be viewed as a mere pit stop on that band's inevitable road to reunion. That changed with Velvet Revolver, which he formed with ex-Guns bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Matt Sorum five years ago, and who are currently one of the biggest, baddest and most successful American rock acts going.

That was far from the expected outcome. From the outset, popular opinion had it that Velvet Revolver—which also includes former Stone Temple Pilots singer Scott Weiland (himself no stranger to conflict and controversy) and guitarist Dave Kushner—would go down in flames. "It was like there was this strange desire to see us fail," Slash says. "There was so much undue pressure put on us because of who we are and the bands we came out of. People basically pigeonholed us as this chemically abusive group of guys, and it seemed like all anyone wanted to talk about were these tired stories and incidents from our pasts."

Although the band garnered its fair share of tabloid-style turmoil early on, most notably for Weiland's public bouts with drug addiction and tangles with the law, in the end Velvet Revolver proved their detractors wrong. Their 2004 debut, *Contraband*, entered the *Billboard* charts in the top position,



spawned four hit singles, nabbed a Grammy and has since sold more than two million copies in the U.S. alone. In addition, the band pulled off a hugely successful globe-spanning tour in support of the album, during which, cynics be damned, they didn't break up.

Now they're back with *Libertad*, an album that is arguably more enjoyable, and undoubtedly more ambitious, than its predecessor. *Contraband* was a tumultuous, menacing record, an antagonistic response to the intense public scrutiny placed on the nascent band (the airing of a VH1 reality show documenting their first steps didn't exactly help matters in this regard), as well as the strife caused by their singer's personal and legal troubles. *Libertad*, on the other hand, is stylistically diverse, musically deep and, at times, almost jubilant.

Slash contends that he and Velvet Revolver "weren't looking to do anything particularly different" this time out but were simply in a better place, both individually and collectively, than when working on *Contraband*. "One thing we were conscious of was that we wanted to create something better than anything any of us had done in the past. As a result, I think we came up with a

record that's pretty dynamic. Also, we were more comfortable writing with one another this time, and certainly, after all the touring, more used to playing together. In every way, we're just a better band now."

The evidence of this is all over *Libertad*, on which Velvet Revolver sound positively reinvigorated. Full-throttle cuts like "Let It Roll," "She Builds Quick Machines" and "Just Sixteen" tear by with an energy and exhilaration too often lacking in musicians more than half their age. The songs continue to be anchored by McKagan and Sorum's powerhouse rumble and characterized by Slash's bluesy riffing and curlicue leads, but there's also a substantial sonic contribution from the other band members, as well. Dave Kushner, for one, took on a larger role in the writing process this time, most notably on the funky "Get Out the Door," for which he supplied much of the music. "Dave was coming up with cool stuff all over the place," Slash says. "And he wrote some guitar lines that really offset what I



I WENT ON A BINGE AND TOOK IT TO THE NINES, KNOWING THAT ON A CERTAIN DATE I WAS GOING TO WALK INTO REHAB."

was doing, which gave the songs a little more depth."

Weiland, for his part, while always the band's primary lyricist, had yet to join Velvet Revolver when much of the music for *Contraband* was conceived. This time, Slash says, Weiland "had a lot more input on the songwriting. What's more, the rest of us were writing more consciously for Scott, whereas with some of the material that was on the last record, we were writing without having any specific voice in mind." Indeed, Weiland's more overt pop sensibilities, so pronounced on many of Stone Temple Pilots' biggest hits, seem to have rubbed off on his current bandmates on *Libertad*, as evidenced by the slinky groove of "She Mine" and the soaring melody of "This Fight."

"Overall," Slash says, "the key to this album is that everyone's voice was heard. We all just wrote, both individually and together, and then went into a rehearsal space and worked through everything as a band. When it came time to record, it really felt like everyone had put their stamp on each song."

That's not to say, however, that things were rose tinted throughout the making of *Libertad*; this is, after all, Velvet Revolver. "It's never that simple with us," Slash says with a laugh. "And I can't really see a time when it will ever be." For

starters, there was the Rick Rubin affair. The band initially tapped the renowned rock and hip-hop producer to man the boards for *Libertad*, but after almost three months of spinning their wheels, they let him go. "Rick just wasn't offering the kind of hands-on interaction that we needed," Slash explains. "We were ready to go, and he would just show up and say, 'write more songs,' and then take off. He's a guy who has a lot going on—the new Metallica album, some other bands he's working with—and it sort of felt like he was double dipping, you know? He wasn't around enough."

Returning to *Contraband* producer Josh Abraham was also out of the question. "Josh didn't have a very good understanding of the old-school way we do things. He was used to working with metal bands who used, like, [Line 6] PODs and shit to record their guitars." In the end, Velvet Revolver enlisted Brendan O'Brien, the producer behind all five Stone Temple Pilots studio albums. "What's funny," Slash says, "is that at first I was wary of Brendan because of his work with STP—I never really liked the STP guitar sound. But he and Scott obviously go way back, and it turned out that Brendan had a really good feel for what we're about. Plus, he's a great musician, so it was easy to communicate with him on a musical level."

After spending much of the previous year writing and rehearsing the new material, Velvet Revolver finally began recording *Libertad* at Henson Recording Studios, in Hollywood, in early January 2007. The band worked on the album through much of the winter, cutting many of the basic tracks live. Slash says, "We did tons of preproduction before going in and had been playing the songs together in a room for so long that we were able to just get the material down on tape that way."

In the studio, Slash relied primarily on his 1959 Les Paul Standard replica, fitted with Seymour Duncan Alnico II zebra pickups, that was built in the mid-Eighties by luthier Chris Derrig. "I used that guitar on *Appetite for Destruction*," Slash



I'VE BEEN GETTING INTO THE IDEA OF USING A CLEANER SOUND TO GET A MORE DYNAMIC ATTACK FROM THE GUITAR.



says, "and every album I've recorded since." Other instruments included a 1965 Fender Strat, which he played on the ballad "Grave Dancer," and a Gretsch 6119 Tennessee Rose hollow-body, the round, clean tones of which can be heard on "This Fight." Rhythm tracks and solos were recorded through a mid-Eighties Marshall JCM800 2203 and a 1988 Marshall JCM2555 (in 1996, this amplifier was reissued as the Slash Signature model). Both amps were fed into Marshall 4x12 cabinets.

Additionally, Slash employed various small combo amps, including a "tiny, old beat-up" Vox AC-15, for color and tonal variation. Outboard gear used on solos included a Dunlop MXR gain/boost, a Chicago Iron Octavia and a variety of Dunlop wahs, including his signature model and a rack-mounted Custom Shop unit.

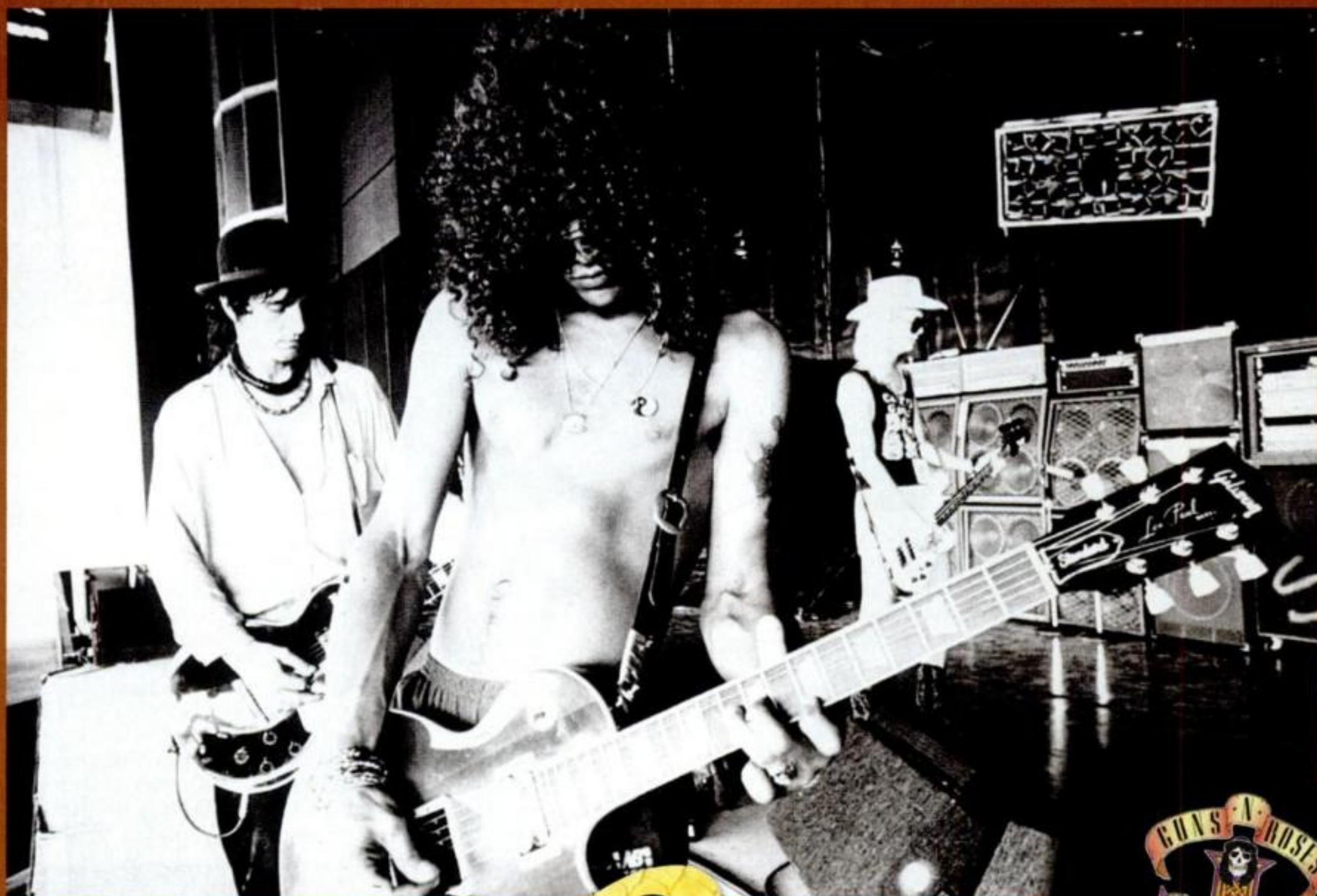
While his guitar and amplifier setup has been fairly consistent in recent years, Slash changed up his tone for *Libertad*. In particular, he reveals that he used "less saturation than in the past, because I really wanted to hear the steel of the strings and the wood of the instrument. Over the last few years I've been hearing some great guitar sounds, real punchy stuff that hasn't been quite so overdriven. It's cool sometimes to dial in tons of distortion, but doing that will also kind of

'phony up' your tone. I've been getting into the idea of using a cleaner sound to get a more dynamic attack from the guitar." And from a performance standpoint, he says that *Libertad* features "more of my live rhythm tracks than any record I've done. And there are also some scratch solos that made it to the final mix. My leads are usually only somewhat worked out in my head before I lay them down, but this time I was even more spontaneous. I'd come up with something on the spot, and the first or second take was what made it on the album."

By the end of the sessions, Velvet Revolver had laid down music for nearly 20 songs. Weiland then cut his vocals at Henson, as well as at Southern Tracks Recording in Atlanta. It was around this time, however, that tragedy struck. While in the midst of tracking his vocals the singer received word that his younger brother, Michael, had died of a drug overdose. "It was just a terrible thing," Slash says. "Scott was completely devastated, but he kept it together." Despite Weiland's history with substance abuse, the band never worried that he might relapse. "You never know how someone's going to react when they're hit with that kind of news, but Scott's done so much to keep himself straight. He's in a much better place than he was a few years ago. I mean, when

we were making the last record, he was living in a halfway house and looking at jail time. We knew he wasn't going to let himself go there, so we just let him know we were there for him."

In an unfortunate turn of events, the members of Velvet Revolver soon found themselves lending their support to another bandmate when Matt Sorum took leave to attend to his own brother, who was in the final stages of a long battle with cancer. He passed away not long after the recording sessions for *Libertad* were completed. "It was a tough period for those guys," Slash says. "With this band, it seems like drugs and death and all that shit is all that gets written about, and all anyone talks about. But then stuff like this happens and you realize how poignant and sad these situations really are."



BOYS MEET

Grill



ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF *APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION*, SLASH RECALLS THE MAKING OF THE ALBUM THAT TURNED GUNS N' ROSES FROM RAW RECRUITS INTO SEASONED SUPERSTARS. BY RICHARD BIENSTOCK

It's

BEEN 20 YEARS SINCE GUNS N' ROSES—singer Axl Rose, guitarists Slash and Izzy Stradlin, bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Steven Adler—recorded their monumental debut effort, *Appetite for Destruction*. A rough-and-tumble collection of bluesy hard rock tunes fueled by a combustible mix of desolation and desire, the album not only launched the band to superstardom but also left an indelible, if somewhat grimy, imprint on the pop music landscape. It has since sold more than 15 million copies in the U.S. alone and remains one of the most beloved and influential recordings in rock and roll.

In celebration of the 20th anniversary of its release, Slash sat down with *Guitar World* to discuss the events leading up to and surrounding the making of *Appetite*, the band's first, and undoubtedly finest, album.

GUITAR WORLD Does it feel like 20 years have passed since *Appetite for Destruction* was released?

“I REMEMBER THAT I WAS REALLY PROUD OF WHAT WE HAD DONE. I STILL AM.”

SLASH In some ways it seems like it was yesterday, and then in other ways it seems like a long time ago. But yeah, I can't believe it. I wasn't even 20 years old when we wrote a lot of that record. [laughs]

GW Is it strange to hear the album discussed in such reverent terms?

SLASH Yeah, I mean, it's not like we're talking about the making of, like, a Zeppelin record, or a Queen record or something like that. Albums that were *projects*, you know? *Appetite* was basically just an off-the-cuff recording. Guns were a club band, and like most first records from club bands, it was mostly made up of material that we had been playing onstage for a while. We were pretty rough around the edges and had virtually no studio experience. We went in there and threw the album together pretty quickly.

GW With *Appetite*, Guns N' Roses came to be regarded as something of an antidote to the glam acts that dominated the Sunset Strip at the time. Although prior to that record you guys weren't averse to using a bit of makeup or hairspray.

SLASH I never used hairspray!

(continued on page 104)

That said, the guitarist faced his own, albeit less severe, "situation" during the making of *Libertad*. Early on, while Velvet Revolver were still working through material in preparation for the studio, Slash took some time off and quietly checked into rehab. "There were a lot of crazy things going on in my life, and it just got to a point where I needed to get away to get my head together," he explains. "We hit some downtime from writing and rehearsing, and I decided to check in."

As to what it was that specifically led to his decision, Slash will say only, "it wasn't like a long, drawn-out drug thing. I hadn't been using all the time; I just went on a little binge and took it to the nines, knowing that on a certain date I was going to walk into rehab." He smiles. "And after I got out, we went straight to work!"

And it's the work that's always been key for Slash. The guitarist admits that he finds it hard to deal with periods of inactivity—"It's usually when things aren't moving a million miles a minute that I get myself in trouble," he says slyly—and as such he shouldn't have any problem being a good boy for the foreseeable future. *Libertad* is being mastered as we speak, and tomorrow afternoon Velvet Revolver begin rehearsals for their upcoming tour. First up is South America, where the band has booked a string of dates in Chile, Brazil and Argentina. After that, it's back to the U.S. for a headlining club jaunt, and then over to the U.K. and Europe for a slew of festival appearances, after which they'll head back out on their own.

Of course, controversy will always be lurking. Take, for starters, the band's bizarre part in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony in New York City this past March.



After signing on to perform in tribute to beleaguered inductees Van Halen, most of whose members opted to not show up for the event, Velvet Revolver nixed an offer from estranged Van Halen frontman David Lee Roth to back him in a run-through of his former group's keyboard-heavy hit "Jump." In the end,

Slash and Co. phoned in two Van Halen covers and Roth slagged them in the press. More recently, Scott Weiland was back in the news when he allegedly trashed a hotel room during a domestic dispute with his wife, Mary, and, a few days later, when his wife was arrested for torching \$10,000 worth of the singer's clothing outside their Los Angeles home.

But, Slash says, it all just comes with the territory. "I couldn't imagine being in a band where everything is just peachy all the time. That's not what rock and roll, at least to me, has ever been about. So yeah, in Velvet Revolver we have our issues." He laughs. "And we

probably always will. The way the personalities in this band work... I just don't see that changing."

Slash reaches for another Gitanes and continues. "But the thing is, we take what we do pretty seriously. We've gone through a lot of shit, but we don't make light of any of it. There's a lot of life in this group, a lot of emotion and angst and anger and passion, and all of that comes out when we write together, when we record together, when we play together." He lights the cigarette and takes a long drag. "So I really don't spend a lot of time worrying about what other people are thinking, or what they're gonna say about things that are going on in my band. They can just keep talking about all the bullshit. We're just gonna keep making music." 🌟

ODD MAN *In*

MEET DAVE KUSHNER, SLASH'S COGUITARIST AND VELVET REVOLVER'S BEST-KEPT SECRET.

AT FIRST GLANCE, it would seem that Dave Kushner couldn't be more unlike Slash, his coguitarist in Velvet Revolver. One is known for his wild mane of curly hair, the other always sports a freshly shaved dome. One favors the classic lines of a Gibson Les Paul guitar, the other the unorthodox shape of a Fernandes Ravelle. And where one plays in a style steeped in the tradition of classic rock and blues, the other tends toward a decidedly modern musical approach, embellishing his sound with all manner of effects. "Duff likes to call me 'Morpheus,'" says Kushner, a reference to the character played by Laurence Fishburne in *The Matrix* films. "I'm always playing around with gadgets, trying to create the craziest, most out-there sounds."

Of the many effect pedals Kushner brought into the studio during the recording of the new Velvet Revolver album, *Libertad*, he is particularly enamored with the Electro-Harmonix Flanger Hoax, which can be heard on the

song "Let It Roll." "It makes this weird oscillating sound that's completely insane," he says. "I remember when I first tried out the pedal, I just sat there laughing."

Kushner's main guitars on *Libertad* were a pair of semihollowbody electrics, a 1965 Gibson ES-335 and a new Yamaha SA2200. He also used his Fernandes Ravelle Elite Dave Kushner Signature model and says the guitar will be his main instrument when the band goes on tour this spring. For amplification, he relied primarily on two Mesa/Boogie combos, a Lone Star and a Stiletto, which he ran in tandem for his rhythm and lead tracks. "They gave me such a great sound that I'm taking them out on tour as well."

Though Kushner is regarded as the "unknown" member of Velvet Revolver, he's actually a seasoned musician whose career stretches back two decades, to when he played bass in the Los Angeles punk act Wasted Youth. He's been a member of numer-

ous bands since. His résumé includes a one-year tenure, in 1996, with Danzig—"It was a



period when Glenn had lost his voice, so for most of the time we just rehearsed without him"—and a stint a few years later with Vanilla Ice, during the rapper's "heavy" phase. "That wasn't much fun," says Kushner, "and it ended kinda crappy: I got stiffed on a couple weeks' pay."

It was while Kushner was playing with the Japanese rock act Zilch, at the turn of the century, that he crossed paths with Duff McKagan. "Duff's band at the time, Loaded, came over to Japan and opened some shows for us," he says. "We started hanging out, and I eventually joined the group." Later, when McKagan hooked up with his

former Guns N' Roses bandmates Slash and Matt Sorum in a new project, he asked Kushner to come down to jam. "And I never left," he says.

And though it was Duff who brought Kushner into Velvet Revolver, the guitarist has a deeper history with his fellow VR guitarist. "Slash and I went to junior high and high school together," he says. "I remember going to see him play at all these local parties around L.A. Over the years we'd bump into each other now and then, but it's a total coincidence that we wound up in a band together."

It turned out to be beneficial for both guitarists. "I think that a lot of guys would be intimidated to be in a band with someone like Slash, just given his persona and the player that he is," says Kushner. "But we have so much history together that I'm pretty comfortable playing with him and have no problem just doing what I do. And that, in turn, gives him the space to do what he does." —Richard Bienstock



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Reality GUITAR

LEARNING FROM RECORDS, JAMMING WITH OTHERS, AND HOW TO PLAY "MR. BROWNSTONE"

HI, AND WELCOME TO MY first ever attempt to write a guitar instructional column. Over the next few issues we're going to run through a few riffs from several Guns N' Roses and Velvet Revolver songs, including some brand-new songs from VR's latest album, *Libertad*.

To be honest, when *Guitar World* first approached me about doing this, my response was, "Thanks, but no thanks." I was very flattered but a little intimidated, because I'm not what you'd call a technically evolved guitarist who knows a bunch of different scales and theory. Don't get me wrong: I'm familiar with terms like "pentatonic" and "blues scale" (see **FIGURE 1**), and I do know what major and minor scales are, too. It's just that whenever my playing gets more complicated or crazier than that, I don't know if what I'm doing is even considered a scale anymore!

To me, melodic significance is the most important quality that a guitar part should have. As long as it has that, I don't care about the scale or theory behind it. That's why I didn't think I was qualified to write a column for *GW*. But when I explained that to the editors, they told me to just talk about what I do and where I'm coming from conceptually. I figured I could handle that, so here I am.

When I started playing, I didn't know anything about guitar, so the very first thing I did was go to a teacher, Robert Wolin, who taught me chords and the rudiments of playing guitar. I didn't really get much out of it, because it just sounded like scales to me, but Robert did inadvertently teach me one thing that was important and became the basis of my playing. In between lessons, he would sit there and play the most amazing rock guitar I'd ever heard. He'd put on something like a Jimi Hendrix record and then play a solo note for note. When I saw that, I thought, That's what I want to do, so I watched what he did a few times and then I quit my lessons, went home and started learning that way.

I started out copping licks from the first Led Zeppelin album, Aerosmith's *Rocks*, Queen's *News of the World*, Jeff Beck's *Blow by Blow* and *Disraeli Gears* by Cream. After that, I started working on other Zeppelin and Cream records, and eventually Jimi Hendrix and the Rolling Stones stuff—which took me back to the three Kings: Freddie, Albert and B.B. The entire process was a learning adventure, and it still is.

In addition to learning licks and



WELCOME
TO SLASH'S
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riffs by ear, I used to jam with friends, and that helped me discover new ideas. We'd get some chord changes together and jam on them for ages. One of the first things I ever jammed to with a band was the main riff from Ted Nugent's "Cat Scratch Fever."

Once you could play that, you could jam on blues licks all day long. That's how I used to practice and still do. I go out and jam with people as often as I can.

The other way I "practice" is to write a lot. Sometimes I'll be toying around with a melody I hear in my head, and if it turns out to be something awkward to play, then that becomes a practice session. The more I expand on the idea, the more practicing I get in. I wish I could give you a good practicing regime, but I can't. I find that if I just practice for the sake of practicing, then I don't get anything out of it. I'm not really one for trying to find a real difficult passage or a picking progression just for the sake of doing it; if it doesn't have melodic content or doesn't enhance a particular piece of music then it's pointless to me. There's a lot of stuff you can practice, but I think that you have to practice something in particular; it can't just be mindless scales. It's obviously good to know some scales, but I find it unrewarding if you don't do something musical with them.

FIGURE 2 shows the main riff to "Mr. Brownstone," from Guns N' Roses' *Appetite for Destruction*. This is a riff that Izzy Stradlin originally came up with, but the way he plays it (Gtr.1) is very different from the way I do (Gtr.2). When I got hold of it, it was just heavier all around. Whenever Izzy and I wrote together and he'd get something going on, I'd usually come up with a heavier version of the same thing. His playing is sort of sloppy in a very cool way, and I'd just tighten things up. That's why Izzy and I worked together really well. 🌟



FIGURE 1 moveable minor blues scale pattern (● = root note)

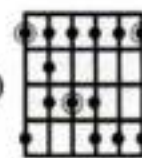


FIGURE 2 "Mr. Brownstone" main riff

Guitars tuned down one half-step (low to high: E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭).

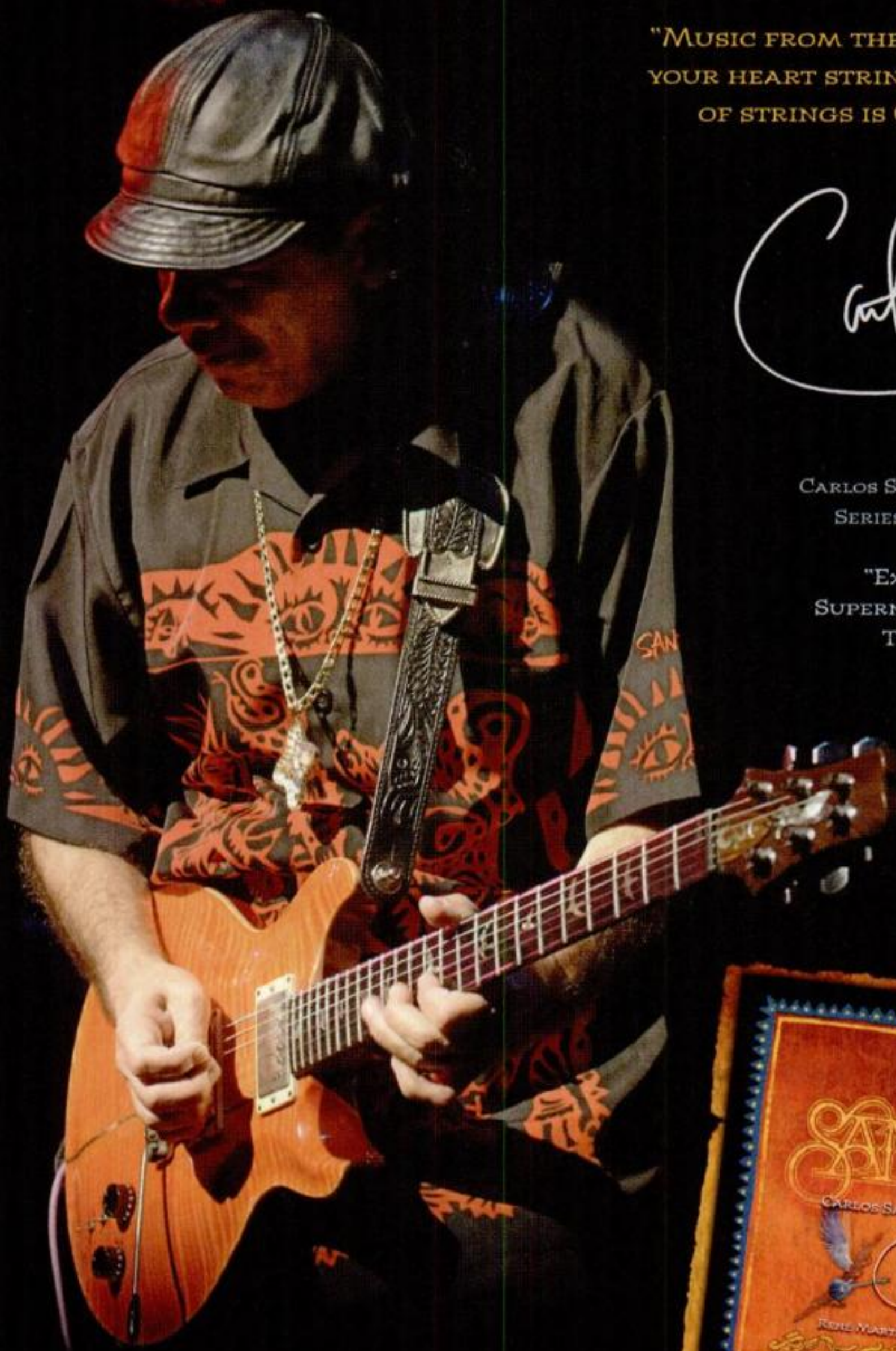
Gtr. 1 (Izzy)
NC(E5) A5 N.C. E5

Gtr. 2 (Slash)
P.M. P.M. P.M. D5 C#5 B5 E5

* upstroke

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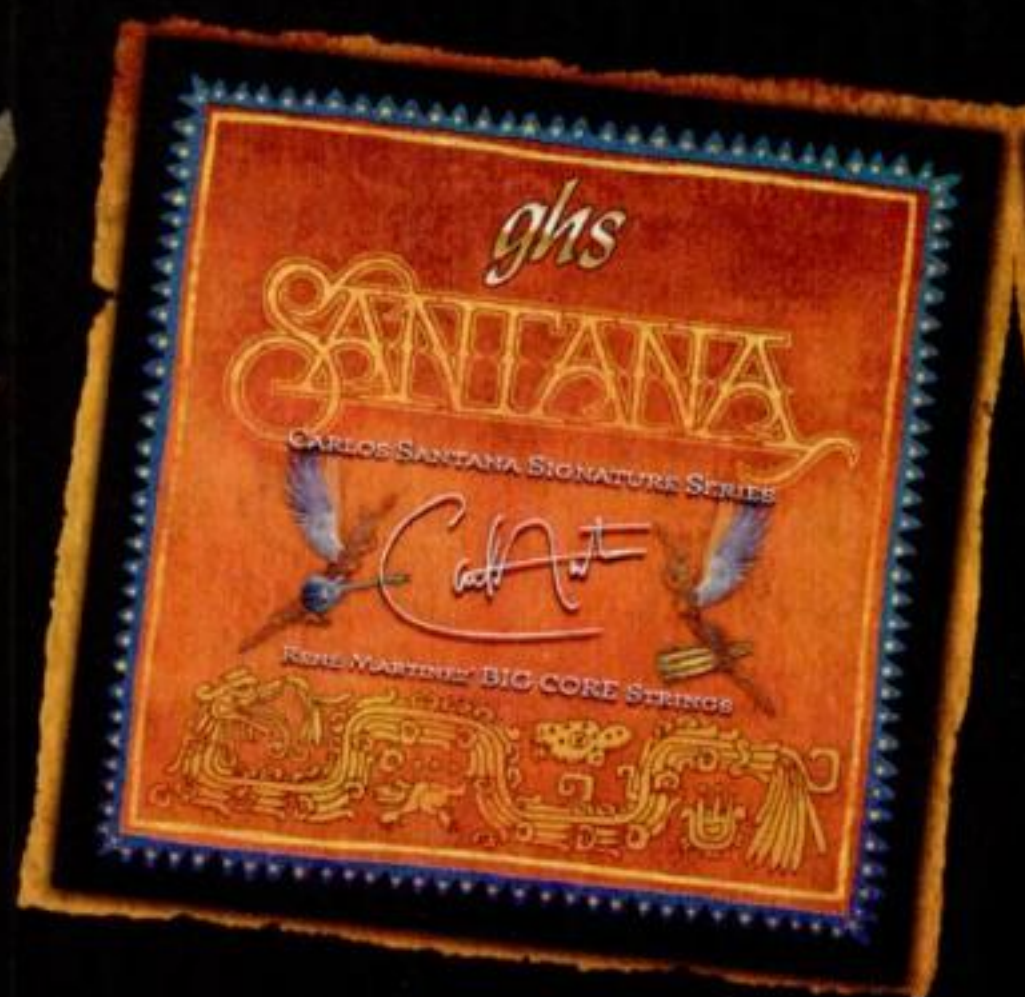
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the stooges

(from left) Scott Asheton, Ron Asheton, Dave Alexander and Iggy Pop, in Hollywood, 1969

REAL COOL TIME

In 1969, the Beatles were history, the Manson family was on the loose, and Vietnam was in flames. The time was perfect for a band of misfits called **THE STOOGES**. Guitarist **RON ASHETON** revisits the punk precursors' chaotic history and tells how they reunited for their new album, **The Weirdness**. By Alan di Perna

GET A BRIGHTER and brassier sound than a lot of people," says Stooges guitarist Ron Asheton. "I've been told, 'Your guitar sound is painful, man!' And I go, 'Hey, cool! All right!'"

Asheton is the man behind some of the raunchiest tones ever generated with an electric guitar and amp. It's those sounds that, in 1969, tolled the death knell for flower power and set the stage for punk, which followed in the mid Seventies. The degenerate lyricism and penchant for public self-mutilation of frontman Iggy Pop hurled the Stooges into the periphery of mainstream consciousness, but the backbone of the group's music was always Asheton's primal axwork. Stooges classics like "I Wanna Be Your Dog," "No Fun," and "T.V. Eye" were built around driving Asheton riffs, and this formula remains the operating principle behind

**“
THOUGH
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THE STOOGES
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ECLECTIC LOT
THAN MOST
PEOPLE
REALIZED.**

frenzied tracks on the Stooges' recent release, *The Weirdness* (Virgin).

The disc reunites three original Stooges—Pop, Asheton and his brother, drummer Scott—and teams them with Minutemen/FIREHOSE bassist Mike Watt, who replaces Dave Alexander, who died in 1975. Far from being a lame, old-guys' reunion record, *The Weirdness* is even rawer than the band's classic late-Sixties/early Seventies recordings. It was produced by Steve Albini (Nirvana, Pixies, Shellac, Big Black), the Federico Fellini of nasty guitar. Moreover, *The Weirdness* is appropriately titled: it's a bunch of guys in their Fifties unleashing angst and libido in a Chicago studio and managing to sound even more pissed off and dangerous than they did in their Twenties.

the stooges
the weirdness

"It's just that Stooges sound," says Asheton. "Just that basic, hard rock and roll sound that's a little different."

That difference is largely due to Asheton's unique guitar tone, something that has never quite been captured on disc. There is some elusive strangeness in it, like Link Wray on acid or the sound of late-Sixties hard rock/proto metal filtered through the weird, blue-collar cultural isolation of chilly Detroit, Michigan.

The critical commonplace is that the Stooges are the band that killed off the Sixties, but Asheton's musical tastes and influences are quintessentially Sixties. He's a baby-boomer rock guitarist through and through. Early on, he played in a blues band with Iggy called the Prime Movers. He even went through a folkie phase and has fond memories of seeing Joan Baez and Josh White Jr. perform at a pizza parlor in his hometown of Ann Arbor, Michigan, just a short westward drive from Detroit.

"Being a college town, they'd get a lot of folk singers coming through. I was a kid, just 15, getting to see all this cool music."

Asheton idolized Brian Jones, the Rolling Stones' blond founder and odd man out: "Everyone talks about Keith Richards, but Brian Jones is the man who played all those weird little parts on the early Stones singles, and all the different instruments. He could quickly master sitar, dulcimer and all that stuff. And that's the foundation of a lot of what I do. Even when we were doing the song 'Little Electric Chair' from Iggy's *Skull Ring* CD [2003], Iggy said, 'Okay, you've got the main riff. Now see if you can come up with that Brian Jones-type line'—that silly three-note line that sets the whole song off."



Reunited as Iggy and the Stooges, circa 1973

Performing at Ungano's, New York City, in August 1970

the stooges

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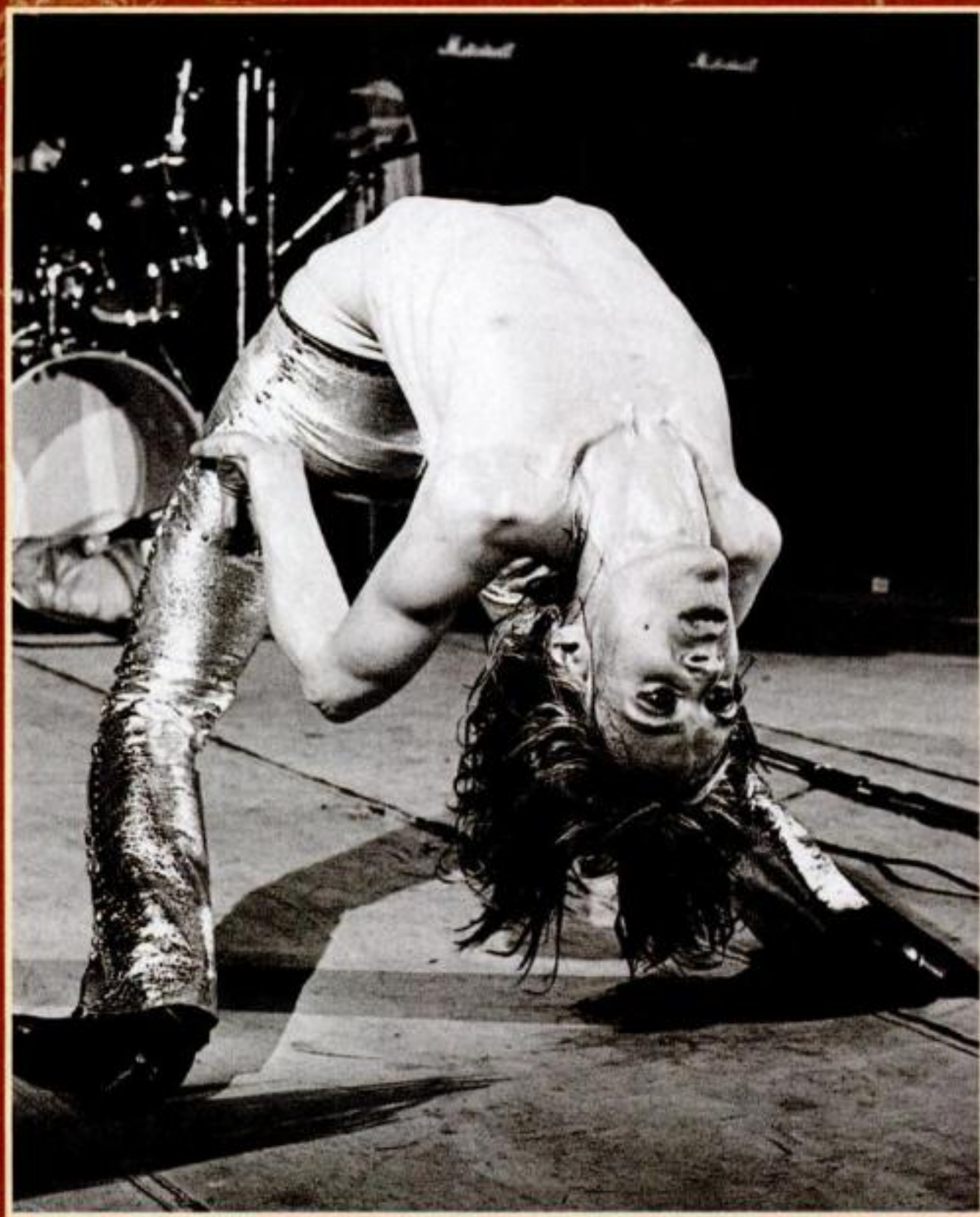
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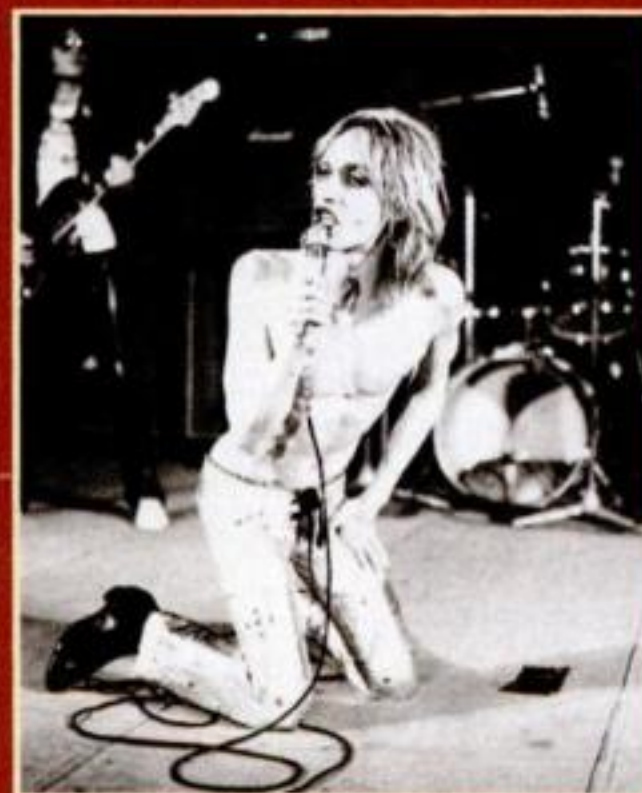
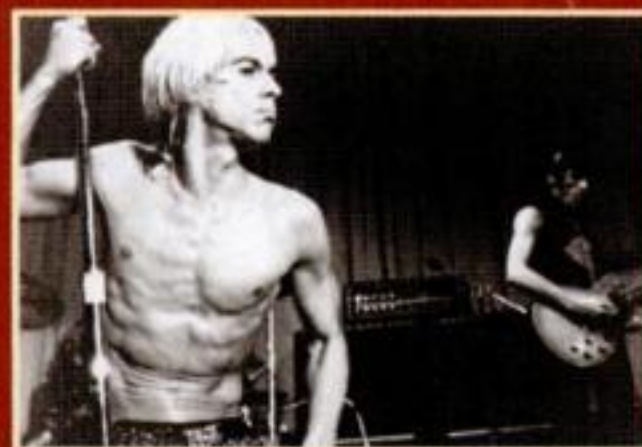
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Scenes from Iggy & the Stooges' 1973 revival in London

got to stand maybe 10 or 15 feet in front of Hendrix. To see him actually play live was a giant influence for me, I knew that I would never be able to play like that, but just the excitement of the feedback..." It was one of Asheton's many defining influences: "The violence of Pete Townshend and the early Move, combined with



included future Stooges bassist Dave Alexander, but at that point, Alexander was on guitar and Asheton on bass. "I wound up playing bass only because Dave already had a guitar," says Asheton. "So I had to get a bass. Down the road a piece, we switched off."

Another hugely influential band for Asheton during this period was the Yardbirds, the seminal Sixties group whose ranks included, at various points, Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page. "The Yardbirds' first record stands up even today," Asheton says. "To me, it's still very exciting and modern. I wouldn't say they're Stooges songs, but they're simple in the way that Stooges songs are simple. And that feedback thing that Jeff Beck was doing was really amazing."

But it was Jimi Hendrix who pushed Asheton over the top. Asheton became enamored of the guitarist early on, shortly after Hendrix's groundbreaking 1967 appearance at the Monterey Pop Festival. "And right after that," he recalls, "Hendrix came to Ann Arbor, to play at a little rock club called the Fifth Dimension. There were maybe 100 people there, because his first record hadn't really come out in the States yet. It was just barely hitting the major cities. The stage in that place was about a foot high, and I

“SO WE LIT A CANDLE, SETTLED DOWN ON THE CUSHIONS, BROKE OUT THE OLD HASH PIPE AND JUST SAT AROUND, REFUSING TO WORK.”
—RON ASHETON



Jeff Beck and Jimi Hendrix, plus Brian Jones for those quirky little parts," he says. "All of that put together is really where I'm coming from."

The Stooges first got together in 1967, the same Summer of Love year that saw the release of Hendrix's first album, not to mention phenomenal debuts by the Doors, Pink Floyd, the Jefferson Airplane and Traffic, among other notables. The original name of Iggy's lot was the Psychedelic Stooges, so killing off hippiedom wasn't really on the agenda. It's probably more accurate to think of the Stooges sound as an unsuccessful attempt to ape psychedelic guitar rock, but one that somehow turned out brilliantly in its own right. It's Haight-Ashbury and Swinging London as seen from the roughneck perspective of the Motor City. Rock history has always been made by weird cultural translations such as these—white English boys trying to sound like African-American bluesmen and becoming the Rolling Stones instead. Or, in the Stooges case, Midwest deadbeats trying to sound trippy and profound.

"You get angry when you hear things in your head that you wanna play but you can't," Asheton remarks. "So you're kinda fighting with yourself while you're playing, and you're really pushing it. All that

struggle comes out in your playing. I like that primitive approach."

Not surprisingly, Asheton's guitar rig in the early Stooges was closely patterned after Hendrix's setup: a Fender Stratocaster through multiple Marshall 100-watt stacks. "I used the Hendrix effects setup, too," Asheton adds. "A Vox wah-wah pedal and a Fuzz Face. It was one of the first fuzz pedals, Gibson came up with the original Fuzz-Tone that Keith Richards made popular in 'Satisfaction.' I had one of those too, but I liked the Fuzz Face better."

Yet when the Stooges recorded their self-titled debut album in 1969, Asheton was going through a Gibson Flying V phase. "I kinda fell in love with the look of the Flying V," he says. "So I wound up doing most of the songs on the first album on that guitar. But at the end, we went back and recorded three more songs, 'Real Cool Time,' 'Not Right' and 'Little Doll.' And by then I'd rediscovered my Strat. I just picked it up one day and said, 'Wow, fuck, I love the Strat. At least I can go back in (continued on page 82)

FROM TOP LEFT: MICK ROCK/RETNA; DANNY FIELDS; ROBERT MATHEU/RETNA; MICK ROCK/RETNA

A photograph of Paul Westerberg, lead singer of the band 10,000 Maniacs, sitting on a stool and playing a black electric guitar with a red and white striped pickguard. He is wearing a dark short-sleeved button-down shirt, black leather pants, and orange-tinted sunglasses. The background is a blurred stage with warm, golden light and a red patterned curtain at the top and bottom of the frame.

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POP LIFE

IGGY POP RECALLS HIS WILD YEARS WITH THE STOOGES AND THE FORCES BEHIND THE BAND'S REVIVAL. By Jaan Uhelszki

AFTER THEY SELF-DESTRUCTED on a Michigan stage in late 1973, the Stooges lived on in memory only. That's where they would have remained had it not been for drummer Scott Asheton's relentless desire to put this primitive behemoth back together again. Over the past two decades, Asheton has pestered and cajoled singer Iggy Pop to reform the group, only to be rebuffed time and time again. In 1995, when Pop was asked, "Are the chances better for a Stooges reunion than recording another record with David Bowie?" he replied with the deadest of deadpans: "It's about 50-50. Maybe you could get David Bowie to do the Stooges reunion. He can sing all the songs."

But eight years later, the 56-year-old singer who once called himself "the world's most misunderstood boy" began compiling a list of possible collaborators for an upcoming album. He wanted to enlist people who could really kick ass and play like his old compatriots of yore, the Stooges. So on a not-so-wild whim, he summoned the Asheton brothers down to his Florida beach house, picked them up from the airport in his 1968 cherry-red Cadillac convertible Deville and had a confab with them at a local diner. There, the three former friends reminisced, picked at their French fries and worked out the logistics of going into a Miami studio the very next day to write and record four songs together.

That was four years ago. Since then, they've headlined Coachella, toured Europe and crisscrossed the U.S., and recorded their first album in 35 years. *The Weirdness* is still fueled by the same anger and ennui that oozed out of their first two records, in only a slightly more digestible form. Pop sat down with *Guitar World* to discuss how he found his way back to Stoogetown.

GUITAR WORLD Why did you get back together with the Ashetons?

IGGY POP I never thought the Stooges would be together forever, but at the same time, I never thought that we wouldn't. There was something about this group—something we did that no one else did. Ron and I have played in other bands, but they weren't the Stooges. We could've called them the Stooges, but we didn't. So that's interesting. I think we knew we hadn't played out our final chapter together.

GW What's one of the more outlandish things that happened to you during your time with the Stooges?

POP One incident that comes to mind happened while we were touring with the J. Geils Band. I remember asking their singer,

Peter Wolf, "Hey, Peter, you got any downers?" He said, "Well, come to my room, there are a few things I want to ask you about." I was a little wary, because people were always trying to steal ideas from me to further their careers. Anyway, he opened this big suitcase full of pills, and then the next thing I remember is waking up with a gash in my head. Ron said people were chasing me down the hall.

GW You did get yourself in a lot of fixes. You once slashed yourself at Max's Kansas City in New York and Alice Cooper had to drive you to the emergency room.

POP Yeah, I didn't want to go. I think Alice just wanted to be able to brag that he drove Iggy Pop to the hospital. I started arguing with him: "Hey, I want to go over to this chick's house." And after I got out of emergency, that's where I went. She was hot, but she was this Upper East Side chick and she had a very beautiful deco fishbowl full of Quaaludes. So there's shit like that—outlandish in a funny way, you know?

GW I think people would be surprised at the rather high-minded origins of the Stooges.

POP The Stooges were conceived in the University of Michigan undergraduate library. I got the idea to sing shirtless from a book that I read on Egyptology. I kept looking at the pharaohs and thought, These guys look bitchin'; they never wear shirts. But when the Stooges moved into the same house, I didn't actually have books around, because once you start living with a gaggle of juvenile delinquents, it's hard to do anything but strum a guitar and pass out. My record collection took the place of books at that point. What was key was that I was the only band member that didn't watch TV. When the band got tired at the end of the day, they'd all turn on the tube, but I'd go off and scheme

“WE HAD ABSOLUTELY NO RESPECT WHATSOEVER FOR THE CONVENTIONS OF HUMAN LIFE OR CIVILIZATION.”
—IGGY POP

and think, I'm still kinda that way.

GW When you all first started, did you have a mission?

POP It was just chemistry. We were buds. We would get together and listen to certain things because they were weird. The first time I went over to meet our manager, Jimmy Silver, he was playing John Coltrane. It made me violently sick. I said, "I'd never heard anything like that, and it makes me feel ill."

I was very high on hash, but still, it was the music that made me sick. And then about an hour into the record I started to understand it. I went, "Oh my God!" This happened to me the first time I heard the Velvet Underground's *Banana* album [The Velvet Underground & Nico]. I went to a college LSD party, heard it and said, "What trash!" And then suddenly I liked it. I think there were these key, ear-open-

ing experiences.

GW There was something quasi-religious about the Stooges and the way people deified the band.

POP There was the sacred, but on the other hand there was a lot of the profane. We were all pulling chicks every weekend. We had absolutely no respect whatsoever for the conventions of human life or civilization.

GW There are so many bands that say the Stooges were their inspiration, and they all aspire to get a similar sound, but they try to imitate your analog sound with digital technology and it never works.

POP You can't make that sound using technology, but you can make something else that's good. I think some of the best young bands now are trying to use a pastiche of everything good that they ever heard, and every once in a while I hope they grab a little off us, too. That's how it should be. But what we were doing was different—it was not a frantic pastiche or a paste-together amalgam. But we now live in a paste-together world.

GW What do you think gave your first album its vibe?

POP I'll always maintain that album would not have the aura without John Cale, who produced

it. If it had been produced by some dweeb from Royal Oak, Michigan, no way. We had fucking John Cale dressed as Dracula.

GW Really? He dressed up for the sessions?

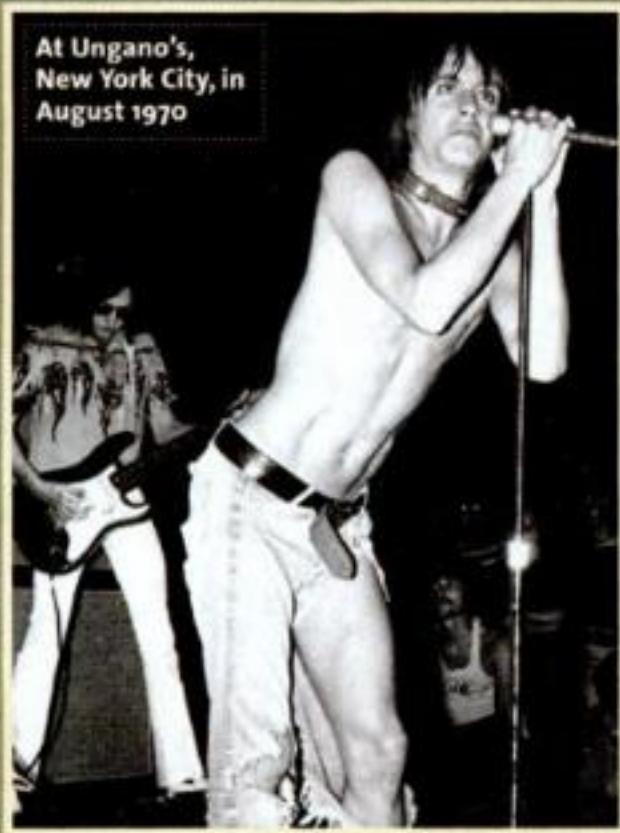
POP Yeah, dressed every day in a full-length black cape with a red liner and a big collar. We'd go out with him, and he'd just freak everybody out. The studio was located over a peepshow on Times Square in New York fucking City, man. That placed a certain compression on us, and up rose the group! Cale took us to all kinds of events, called "happenings." You meet these people, and your unconscious finds ways to reply to these people through your music, and it gave us a totally different way of thinking about ourselves, life and art.

GW Do you feel like you've escaped your colorful past? Do you have any regrets?

POP I don't voice my regrets; I use them. If there's something I'm disappointed in, I try to use it in the requisite improvement.

GW Are you thinking about the future. Is there a long-term plan?

POP There might be one in my head, but nobody's heard about it. No, we're in a band. We're taking things a bite at a time. ■



At Ungano's, New York City, in August 1970

TOP: ROBERT MATHIEU/RETNA; LEFT: LEE BLACK CHILDERS

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Ravi Bhadriraju (left) and Bobby Thompson



DESERT STORM

by Brad Angle

Photograph by Sam Scott-Hunter

After conquering MySpace and winning support from the man who discovered Metallica and Slayer, **JOB FOR A COWBOY** are riding the new wave of extreme metal on their Metal Blade debut, **GENESIS**.

TALK ABOUT DUMB LUCK. When the death metal band Job for a Cowboy posted a few songs from their independently released EP, *Doom*, on their MySpace page, they hoped to get a few additional profile views and maybe attract more fans to their gigs.

In no time, this band of high school metalheads acquired more than 100,000 MySpace friends, logged some six million song plays and drew the attention of Brian Slagel, the founder of Metal Blade Records and the man who helped give Slayer and Metallica their starts. After a multi-label bidding war, Job for a Cowboy signed with Metal Blade, which recently released the band's full-length debut, *Genesis*. The whirlwind journey from obscurity to extreme metal's "next big thing" has been full of surprises for the Phoenix-area group.

"It's really shocking how big everything's gotten," guitarist Ravi Bhadriraju says. "We booked

local shows, created a MySpace page... But we never expected it would catch on like it did. It's a total phenomenon."

Word of mouth drew Slagel to the band initially. "I have a residence in Phoenix, so I'd heard people talking about them," he says. "Their name really interested me, so I went to their MySpace page and had a listen. It sounded awesome." The sound Slagel heard—a relentless assault of deep-toned death metal riffing, hyper-technical rhythms and scathing vocals—has been taken to the next level on *Genesis*, emphasizing brutal underpinnings that will appeal to old-school metalheads as well as fans of modern metalcore who are itching to graduate to something heavier. Like Megadeth's *Peace Sells...But Who's Buying?* or Death's *Spiritual Healing*, *Genesis* is the sound of a young band transforming its collective social and emotional frustrations into 30 minutes of technically impressive, crushing metal.

"Since the old Flotsam and Jetsam and Sacred Reich days, there haven't been a lot of interesting

bands coming out of Phoenix," Slagel says, referring to two bands he himself signed to Metal Blade in their heydays. "But Job hit me right in the gut. Their sound is unique, they're excellent players, and I knew they were right for Metal Blade."

It didn't hurt that they were misfits within their small suburban town of Glendale, northwest of Phoenix. Bhadriraju was a high-school outcast, a prerequisite for every budding metal guitarist. "I was a total nerd in school," he says with a laugh. "But Metallica really helped me." He first heard the group in 2002, when he was all of 14. "I immediately spent days on end trying to play *Ride the Lightning*. I had no social life but plenty of free time to play guitar." The time Bhadriraju spent woodshedding helped him quickly reach an advanced level of rhythmic proficiency and technical expertise.

The following year, he and two of his equally marginalized friends, vocalist Jonny Davy and guitarist Andrew Arcurio, decided to start a band. They christened themselves Job for a Cowboy as a tongue-in-cheek allusion to their southwestern surroundings: "The band is serious," says Ravi. "The name isn't." As it happened, Bhadriraju and his pals found little they could identify with in their placid hometown. "There's cacti, movie theaters, malls, girls...it's all just normal," Bhadriraju says. "It's complete bullshit." And yet, the southwest ranch territory surrounding Glendale is central to the band's identity. It's evident in their jeering name, the grotesque cow-skull designs on their merchandise and their urgent, aggressive sound.

The three musicians soon hooked up with bassist Brent Riggs and drummer Elliott Sellers, and the quintet began working on the material that would eventually make its way onto JFAC's 2005 EP, *Doom*. Recorded in Phoenix and released independently on King of the Monsters Records, *Doom* was full of violent riffs, grindy rhythms and shredded vocals that issued a strong statement of purpose—Job for a Cowboy were not just another metalcore band—and the kids came out en masse to hear it. "Glendale had lots of local metalcore bands," says Bhadriraju, "but we were one of the only death metal bands."

As 2006 rolled in, JFAC had built a strong local following around Arizona and were opening for acts like Dillinger Escape Plan and As I Lay Dying. The combined effort of fostering grass-roots support and online exposure paid off, and the labels came calling. "There were definitely a lot of labels sniffing around," says Slagel. "But Metal Blade got in fairly early, so it was obvious we weren't jumping on the bandwagon."

"A few labels came out to Phoenix and bought us some dinners," says Bhadriraju. "But we immediately felt at home with Metal Blade. No one really



caught on with us like they did. It just felt right to sign with them."

Once Slagel and Metal Blade were onboard, the band's tour schedule expanded and the level of personal commitment required from JFAC's members increased. Not everyone was up to the challenge. "Andrew stopped clicking," Bhadriraju says. "He didn't want to get involved or show up to practice. Plus he couldn't get his parts down. So we booted him." Bhadriraju approached his close friend Bobby Thompson, a guitarist well versed in Hate Eternal, Decapitated and Cannibal Corpse riffs, to replace Arcurio as second axman. A two-week crash course followed, and Thompson was ready when the band joined the Metal Blade-sponsored Steers & Beers tour. But that's not to say the guitarist's first few shows with JFAC were easy. At 20, Thompson may be the senior member of JFAC, but he felt sufficiently green in the presence of the tour's road-worn metal bands. "It was intimidating," Thompson says with a chuckle. "We were opening for Misery Index, Cattle Decapitation...bands that have been touring for years."

Once Thompson had settled in, JFAC began working on their full-length debut.

Surprisingly, the two guitarists found their styles were complementary. "Me and Ravi write really well together," says Thompson. "It's easy for us to get on the same page when it comes to writing riffs. And that's what *Genesis* is about: heavy, aggressive in-your-face riffage."

Though the writing process got off to a good start, it took an unexpected turn when Sellers left to attend art school. "That's when the writing process became a fucking nightmare," says Bhadriraju. "For a while we tried to write without drums, but it was impossible." The group eventually convinced Sellers to stick around long enough to write and record *Genesis*, and recording commenced in Phoenix at Blue Light Audio Media, the same studio where JFAC tracked *Doom*.

Between sessions, JFAC auditioned drummers so that they could fulfill their already-booked tour supporting Acacia Strain.

"It was kinda hectic," says Thompson. "We knew no one in Arizona that was either available or into our music, so we decided to put out the word on our MySpace page and ask people to send in videos." Drummers from across the country taped themselves playing to JFAC tracks and submitted them, via YouTube. "We got a bunch of videos and had a few drummers try out," Thompson says. Jon Rice emerged as the winner. "We were so stoked when Jon auditioned, because he nailed it right away." The band completed recording just in time to teach Rice the set and jump on the Acacia Strain dates.

With the recently released *Genesis* already garnering critical acclaim and fresh off a European tour supporting Unearth, these five kids from nowhere Arizona are extremely excited and ready to unleash their pummeling live show across the U.S. this summer. "The craziest thing is that we're playing in places we've never been to before and people know our music," says Bhadriraju. "I don't know how it happened, but we've definitely caught on with the kids." ●

AXOLOGY

GUITARS (Bhadriraju) Japanese Ibanez Prestige Hybrid RG, Ibanez RGT2020 Prestige, Ibanez JPM P4, Ibanez S2170FW Prestige; (Thompson) Japanese Ibanez Prestige Hybrid RG, Ibanez RG20061 Prestige, Ibanez RGT220A

AMPS (Bhadriraju) VHT D120 head, two Mesa/Boogie Standard 4x12 cabs; (Thompson) Krankenstein head, two Mesa/Boogie Standard 4x12 cabs

EFFECTS (Bhadriraju) T.C. G-System multi-effect pedal; (Thompson) Boss NS-2 Noise Suppressor, Boss TU-2 tuner, Maxon OD808 overdrive



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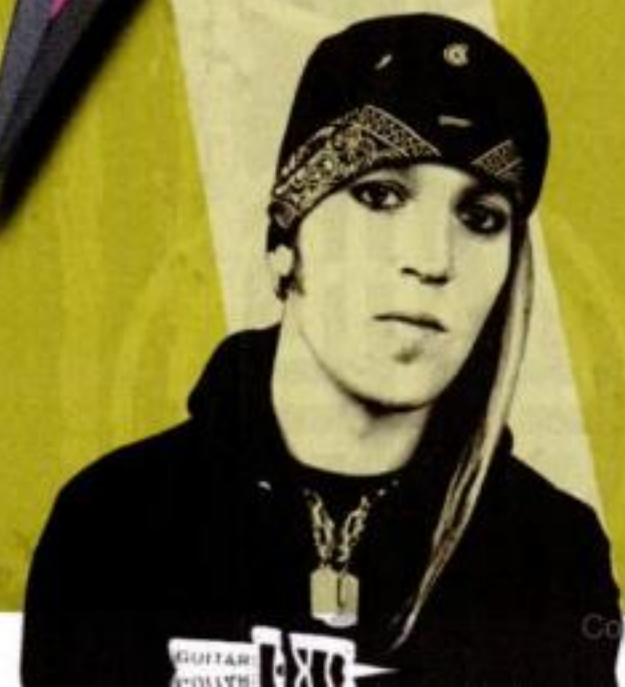
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BEAST



FROM THE EAST

SINCE 1975, ESP has been conquering the world of metal guitar one guitarist at a time. **GEORGE LYNCH, KIRK HAMMETT** and **ALEXI LAIHO** discuss their signature axes and contributions to the Tokyo guitar maker's history. **BY ALAN DI PERNA**

"THE BIGGER GUITAR companies hate us," says ESP president Matt Masciandaro. An affable New York guy, Masciandaro isn't looking for trouble; it's just that he runs a lean machine of guitar production, an operation that has emerged as a major force in the metal guitar market.

ESP is not your dad's guitar company. There are no yellowing photographs of guys in cowboy hats on the walls of Masciandaro's office at ESP HQ in North Hollywood, California, just gleaming rows of pointy, lethal-looking axes bristling with the familiar armaments of metal guitar: double-octave necks with super-jumbo frets and Floyd Rose tremolo systems in gothic matte black.

The ESP catalog reads like a who's who of modern metal acts (or a recent issue of *Guitar World*, for that matter). Here you'll find guitarists and bassists from Lamb of God, Slayer, Atreyu, Rammstein, Soulfly, Deftones, Queensrÿche, Helmet, GWAR, Metal Church, Eighteen Visions, Napalm Death, Cradle of Filth, Nightwish and Pain. ESP has become home to the dark and down-tuned, the disturbed dirt bags, the compulsive shredders and the children of steel-string abuse. After all, signature models aren't a PR write-off at ESP, nor are they a marginal part of the business. Signature models are ESP's way of life. By working closely with the cream of metal's crop, ESP has been able to dial in the look, the sound and the features that young players crave most.

"It's not just that the artists are out there having their pictures taken with the guitars or using them in videos," Masciandaro explains. "They're actively helping us design the product, too. That's probably our biggest strength: the collaboration we've had with these

artists who are creating today's music."

Three of the most representative and important guitarists in the ESP story are George Lynch, Kirk Hammett and Alexi Laiho. Lynch has been closely involved with the company ever since the mid Eighties, when ESP first took off in America and Lynch's band Dokken ruled the hair metal highway. Hammett was another early ESP convert, and after he came onboard in 1987, he brought not only his coguitarist, James Hetfield, to ESP but also legions of aspiring guitar metalheads who grew up worshiping at the church of Metallica. Laiho, for his part, represents the rising new generation of metal, and design input from the Children of Bodom virtuoso is helping to bring ESP into a new era.

ESP's roots go back to Japan. In 1975, Hisatake Shibuya opened up the Electric Sound Products (ESP) guitar shop in Tokyo. The shop grew into a company that made some guitars but mainly specialized in guitar replacement parts. In 1983, ESP opened an outpost on 18th Street in New York City, where it began building custom guitars for New York-based players like Living Colour's Vernon Reid and Bruce Kulick of Kiss.

The company landed in the Big Apple just as the Eighties hot-rod guitar craze was getting underway. Today, the idea of assembling a complete guitar from parts manufactured by different companies is taken for granted, but before the Eighties, it didn't exist; you bought one of several stock models offered by a guitar manufacturer, and that was it. If something broke, you went to the company that made the guitar to get a replacement part. All that began to change when pioneers like Seymour Duncan and Larry DiMarzio started offering replacement pickups that were arguably better than the stock gear they were designed to replace. High-quality replacement hardware, necks and bodies soon followed.



LYNCH: ROSS MARINO/RETNA; HAMMETT: MICK HUTSON/REDFERNS/RETNA; LAIHO: ANGELA BOATWRIGHT/RETNA; GUITARS: COURTESY OF ESP

LYNCH



HAMMETT



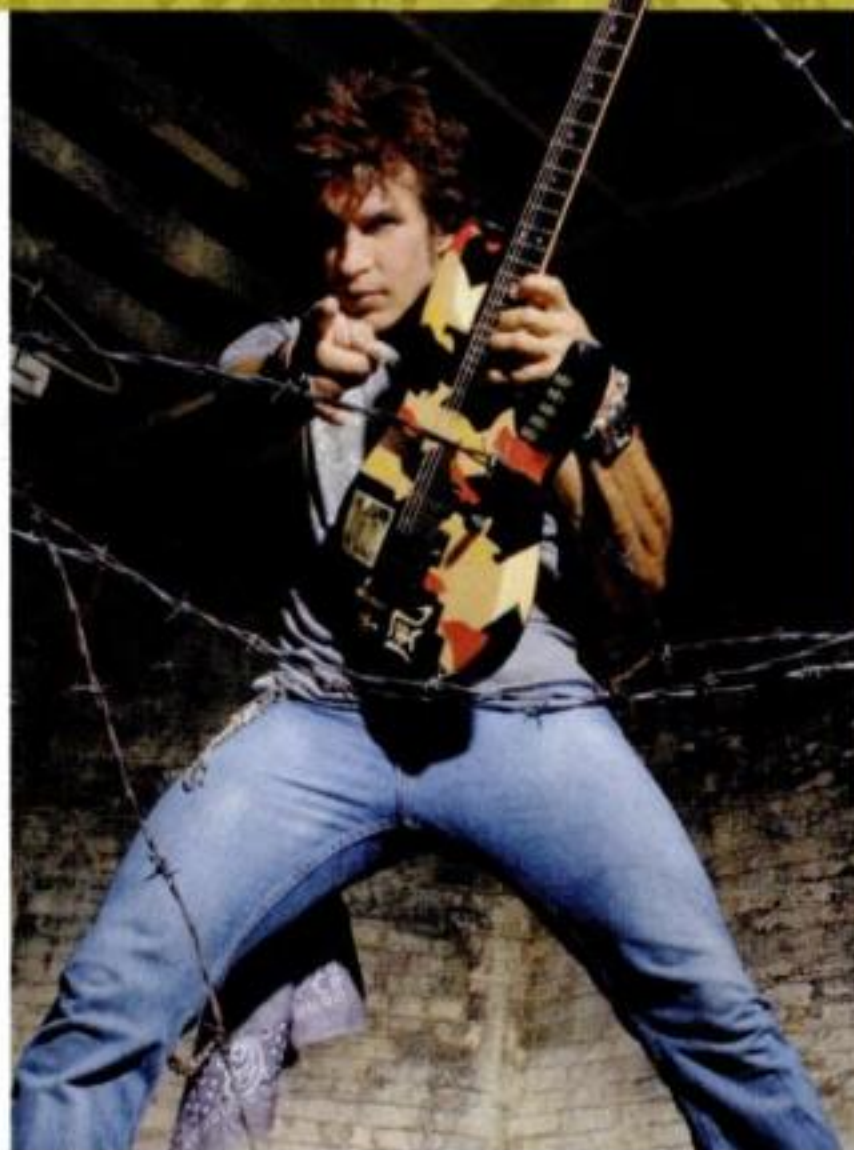
GEORGE LYNCH

Assembling “Frankenstein” guitars out of custom replacement parts was an idea that Eighties metal guitar icons like Eddie Van Halen helped popularize. George Lynch comes out of this school of thought as well. Before finding success with Dokken, he gave guitar lessons and would often assemble guitars to sell to his students.

“Those are my roots,” says Lynch. “I would go hang out with Grover Jackson at Charvel, and he would build guitars from scratch. It was stuff in the Eddie [Van Halen] mold: real simple controls and a nice plank body. Boogie or Warmouth body parts, Mighty Mite hardware...stuff like that. I’d spend time routing bodies and picking up old salvage necks, just bolting them together and selling them to my students. That’s how I made a living.”

Once Dokken conquered the hair metal hit parade, Lynch got an endorsement deal with Kramer. But on one occasion when he needed a replacement neck, a Kramer employee recommended ESP. During a 1986 Dokken tour of Japan, Lynch walked into an ESP shop to check out some necks. The staff there offered to make him a guitar. As it happened, he knew exactly what he wanted.

“We sketched it out right there in the store,” the guitarist recalls, “the thickness of the guitar, the neck dimensions, frets, pickups and controls. This was a whole different world for me. ESP had its own store, factory, music school and luthier school. These guys were really on top of it. They came out with white coats and micrometers and said, ‘What do you



want to do?” I told them in detail, and we sketched it out. I went home, and a little later, they sent me the guitar.”

The guitar that Lynch outlined that day in Japan would become his first ESP signature model, the Kamikaze, a plank-bodied metal machine with a camouflage paint job, WWII Japanese fighter pilot graphics and a “banana” headstock. The guitar is very much in the spirit of the instruments Lynch had been assembling on his own prior to Dokken’s rise to fame. The basic Kamikaze body shape is Stratlike, only flat-topped rather than contoured and slightly larger than a traditional Strat.

“George was after a very bright, resonant sound at the time,” says

LAIHO



Masciandaro, who was actually Lynch’s guitar tech. “That’s why the body is oversized. If you take a regular Strat and make the body radius sharper, it adds a lot more meat to the body. Also, the Kamikaze body is made of maple, which is a heavy wood. So that body weight and size give the Kamikaze a lot of sustain, which is what George was after then. He wanted something that could cut through anything else that was going on onstage.”

Many of the Kamikaze’s features would appear on the subsequent signature models that Lynch created with ESP. (There have been seven or eight so far, depending on how you count.) The thin, U-shaped neck, for instance, reflects Lynch’s playing preferences. “I like wide, flat necks with a large 1 3/4-inch radius at the nut and huge frets,” he explains.

The Kamikaze and other Lynch signature models typically feature a Seymour Duncan humbucker in the bridge position and an ESP SS-120 single-coil pickup in the neck position. These days, Kamikazes come equipped with a Duncan Screamin’ Demon humbucker, but over the years Lynch

PHOTO COURTESY OF ESP



has used different Seymour Duncan pickups and has even developed a few of his own signature pickups with the transduction guru.

"I've been with Seymour for almost the same amount of time that I've been with ESP," says Lynch. "I used to take the trek up to Santa Barbara when Seymour had his shop in a little storage unit off the railroad tracks. He would lay pickups out to dry on folding tables. We would just wind pickups together and come up with ideas. A lot of my pickups with him were custom one-offs that developed into signature models."

The Kamikaze's controls are simplicity itself: a single volume knob that also functions as a push/pull pickups selector. "George is not one of those guys who needs to have both pickups on at once," Masciandaro explains. "It's either one or the other. When I was with him, when he would go to solo, he'd generally pull up on the volume pot to activate the single-coil pickup in the neck position. George would generally solo on the neck pickup and then go back to the bridge pickup for rhythm. He's not the first person to do that, but for that type of music it's a little

unexpected. That's what he was into, however, at least when he first starting playing the Kamikaze."

Originally a one-off guitar for Lynch's personal use, the Kamikaze went into production as ESP's first signature model in 1987, which is also the year that Masciandaro joined ESP. Along with being Lynch's guitar tech during his tenure with Dokken, Masciandaro had worked as a guitar tech for Aerosmith and tour manager for Motörhead, so he brings some real rock and roll road experience into his leadership at ESP. In a sense, Masciandaro owes his position at ESP to Lynch, who got him his first job at the then-fledgling guitar company.

"The experience of working with Dokken just beat Matt up to the point where he was like, 'I can't do this anymore. I gotta get a real job,'" Lynch says. "So I basically got Matt his job at ESP. He worked his way up and completely changed that company around to the point where they can't even accommodate their own growth. It's a real success story. He's my daughter's godfather and we're best friends. It's a great relationship."

**NOW
CELEBRATING
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ARTISTS LIKE
LYNCH AND
HAMMETT,
ESP HAS
COME A LONG
WAY FROM
THAT TINY
THREE-MAN
SHOP IN NEW
YORK CITY.**

"When I started at ESP in New York," Masciandaro recalls, "there were three guys in the office: two guys setting up guitars and one guy in shipping. That's how small the company was. So when I started, I was just learning my way around and doing whatever needed to be done. I ended up in sales. As the company grew, I started getting more responsibilities and ended up where I am now."

Lynch and ESP recently commemorated their long and productive relationship by releasing a limited anniversary edition of the Kamikaze, the GL-20. "We chose that because it was George's first model with ESP," says Masciandaro. "That guitar was pretty tweaked out to start with; there wasn't a lot more we could do with it, but we found a few things. The original model had two [Japanese] kanji characters that mean 'kamikaze' silk-screened onto the body, and some bombs silk-screened onto the lower horn of the body. But on the Anniversary model, the characters and the bombs are inlaid in mother-of-pearl instead of silk-screened. And on the fingerboard, instead of doing the regular dot inlays, we did bomb inlays in mirror material. There's also a large

airplane mirror inlay running from the ninth through the 12th fret. Additionally, George wanted a kill switch added—an on/off mini switch—below the volume control. Only 50 of these guitars will be produced for the whole world, with 20 of those going to the United States. So it's a very limited edition."

KIRK HAMMETT

Shortly before Masciandaro joined ESP in 1987, the company began a relationship with Metallica guitarist Kirk Hammett. At this point Metallica were on the cusp of major-label success and well on their way to legendary status as godfathers of thrash metal. "It was actually [*Anthrax* guitarist] Scott Ian who turned me on to ESP," Hammett recalls. "One time I was in New York with Scott and he pulled out all these guitars. They had all these cool comic book character graphics on them. I played one and I was really taken aback by how solid and good it felt. I said to Scott, 'Whoa, where are you getting all these guitars?' He said, 'Oh, I have an endorsement with this company called ESP.' I was so impressed with ESP that Scott set up a meeting between me and the guy who was in charge of artist relations."

"I went to the warehouse, and I remember checking out a bunch of necks that they had lying around, holding each one and getting the feel of it. I chose one, and at the time I was really in love with the headstock that the Jackson Soloist had. So I said to the ESP guys, 'Can you build me this kind of neck with that kind of headstock? And on top of that, I'm a big fan of neck-through-body guitars. So can you make me this guitar with a neck-through-body and can you put skulls on it?' They said, 'Sure.' And I was impressed just with that reply. I instantly knew that they'd try to accommodate any sort of request I threw at them. I remember waiting for about six or eight months. The guitar came and I was blown away by the quality, the feel and the sound. I took that guitar on tour and into the studio with me to record *And Justice for All* [1988]."

That guitar became the basis of the KH-2, Hammett's first ESP Signature Series guitar, which is still in production today. It boasts a Strat-style silhouette—"what we call the M2 body shape," Masciandaro explains. He adds, "Kirk prefers a thin neck with a U-shaped contour and a relatively small, 41mm width. It's smaller than the standard ESP neck that we put on our average production models."

"Sometimes I wrap my thumb over the neck," adds Hammett, "and play chords with my thumb—the old Hendrix deal. Also, the first couple of KH-2 guitars that they made for me had scalloped fingerboards from the 18th or



19th fret upwards. But if you look at that guitar nowadays, you can't even tell that the neck is scalloped. It's so worn."

Hammett calls the original KH-2 his "Skully" guitar, in honor of the skull-and-crossbones fret-marker motif. On that very first guitar ESP made for Hammett, the inlays were positioned vertically with one another. "But when we were going to make Kirk a second one," Masciandaro recalls, "he said, 'make the inlays horizontal, so when I'm in playing position, the skull and crossbones will be right side up.' That's basically the only modification we've ever made to that guitar."

The KH-2 is equipped with a Floyd Rose locking tremolo system and two EMG 81s. The active pickups have long been standard equipment for Hammett and are used in all his ESP signature models. "When I first started playing guitar," he explains, "I remember looking through a guitar magazine, and I saw this ad for active pickups. It had to be 1981 or '82. I thought to myself, Wow, what a great idea: put a battery with a pickup in the guitar to make it active and drive up the output. One day I went to the store, picked up an EMG pickup and put it in my main guitar at the time. It made so much of a difference that I actually went to EMG and said, 'I love your pickups. Can we do a deal?' They gave me a bunch of pickups and I settled on the 81s."

Over the years, ESP have made the KH-2 with a variety of wild graphic motifs. There was the infamous *Ouija*-board guitar with graphics lifted from the Hasbro/Parker Brothers' "spirit board" game. That guitar was briefly on the market as a production model until ESP got a cease-and-desist letter from Hasbro/Parker Brothers' attorneys. "We had to stop making them," says Masciandaro. "It got a little bit ugly. I never fought them. They had us. There's only a few *Ouija*-board guitars out there. Kirk has two. And they are going for considerable money if they pop up on eBay."

Even more rare is the "Mummy" KH-2. The graphics that emblazon the guitar are from the Fifties cult

classic film *The Mummy* and were derived from an original movie poster in Hammett's extensive collection of horror movie memorabilia. ESP made only one of these for Hammett, and it resides in his private collection.

Along with custom-graphic beauties like these, ESP has made a variety of unusual guitars for Hammett over the years, including the Surfcaster. Not to be confused with the Charvel guitar of the same name, Hammett's ESP-built Surfcaster is a clear-bodied guitar filled with blue fluid and

oil. "They told me it couldn't be done," says Hammett. "I said, 'Bull. I know you guys can do it.' Lo and behold, they did." ESP later applied the concept to a guitar it made for Mike Riggs of Rob Zombie's band. "He had the exact same setup, but he filled it with red fluid so it seemed like there was blood inside," says Hammett. "I just want to say that my Surfcaster came first."

A little more pragmatic was ESP's next signature model, the KH-3, introduced in 1991. "I always liked the Les Paul Junior body shape," Hammett explains. "So I said, 'Let's take that shape, put a couple of EMG 81s and a Floyd Rose in it.' I thought that Les Paul Junior shape would be perfect for a Floyd Rose, so I made sure the body was thick enough for a Floyd. I played that guitar on the *Black Album* [Metallica, 1991]. I remember taking it into the studio a week after I got it and recording guitar solos with it."

Like most of Hammett's ESP signature models, the KH-3 is an all-black guitar with matte black hardware. And like all of his ESP guitars, it is a neck-through-body instrument. "You can't go wrong with the feel of a neck-through body," he says. "It feels more solid to me. With bolt-on necks, I find that if you lean forward your guitar goes flat. That always bothered me. That's why I've always insisted on a neck-through body."

Hammett's next signature model for ESP, no longer in production, was a neck-through version of the classic Flying V body shape. "Over the course of the *Black Album* tour, I had ESP make me a Flying V," Hammett explains. "At first they said, 'You can't do that; a Flying V body is too thin.' I said, 'Well, make it thicker then!' So they did. They put EMGs in there, and I had them take the devil figure from the Underwood Deviled Ham package and used that for fret markers."

This bulky instrument has a special place in Hammett's guitar arsenal. "All my guitars are set up as lead players," he notes. "But I have to say that the V is a more chunky rhythm kind of guitar. It's gotta be over 12 pounds, and when I tune it down and play it, the bass

**“MY ESPS ARE REALLY DURABLE. I’VE DROPPED MY GUITAR, I’VE LEFT IT OUT IN THE RAIN OVERNIGHT, I’VE THROWN IT ACROSS THE STAGE... AND IT STILL HOLDS UP AND IT STILL SOUNDS GREAT.”
—HAMMETT**



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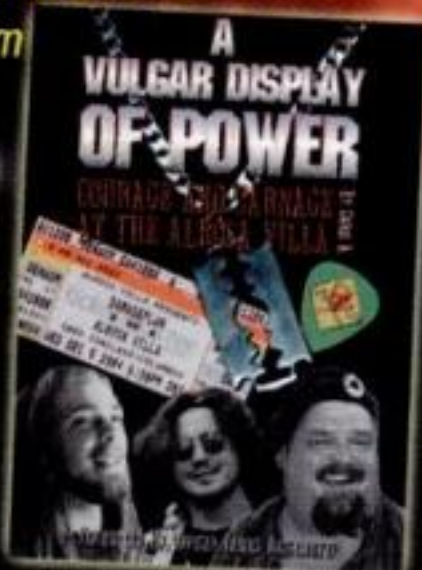
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response is that much greater." ESP eventually used the KH-2 as the basis for baritone guitars it produced for Metallica for the *St. Anger* tour in 2003.

Overall, Hammett estimates he has 20 to 30 ESP guitars at present. His original KH-2 Skully guitar and many instruments from his earliest days with the company are still in regular use. "They're really durable," he says. "I've dropped my guitar, I've left it out in the rain overnight, I've thrown it across the stage... And it still holds up and it still sounds great."

To celebrate their two decades together, Hammett and ESP recently teamed up on a special anniversary KH-2 model, the KH-20. Only 40 of these guitars will be produced worldwide, each one signed by Hammett himself. In place of the usual matte black KH finish, the anniversary model has a choice flamed-maple top, stained and varnished in lustrous black. "Since we couldn't use solid black like we do on all the other Kirk guitars, we used a transparent black finish over the maple top," Masciandaro explains. "And on the fingerboard, in mother-of-pearl, we inlaid a revised version of the skull-and-crossbones fret markers. They're a little more stylized than what we've always used. And then, along the middle of the fingerboard, running from the 10th through 14th frets, we put the model number, KH-20 in Kirk's handwriting, in a mirror material."

Now celebrating its 20 years with artists like Lynch and Hammett, ESP has come a long way from that tiny three-man shop on New York City's 18th Street. ESP eventually moved to 48th Street, Manhattan's Music Row. Matt Masciandaro was made vice president in 1990, and in '93, the company moved to Los Angeles, eventually settling in North Hollywood.

Shortly after ESP's arrival in L.A., Masciandaro was made president of the U.S. operation. One of his priorities was to diversify the company's range of guitars.

"We'd been focusing almost exclusively on custom shop and high-end guitars," he explains, "and it worked out for us up to a point. But there is a ceiling for that market. We wanted to offer the guitars to every player, so in '96 we branched out into the LTD line, which gives us price points that start from \$299 and still run up into the stratosphere. We can offer our products and designs to every level of player."

The ESP guitars are manufactured in Japan, while the LTD line originates in Korea and Indonesia. "We did a lot of research to find the right factories in Korea and other parts of the world," says Masciandaro. Now we have LTDs that go as high as \$1,500 retail. So it's not in any way exclusively an affordable or low-end guitar. I would say that of all the artists who play our guitars on the road and in the studio, there

are at least as many playing LTDs as ESPs. They are a quality instrument."

In 2003, ESP added the X-Tone Paramount Series of semihollowbody guitars. Though more traditional looking, the guitars retain a decidedly modern flair and have found favor with players like Jake E. Lee and Burton C. Bell of Fear Factory. Obviously, metal remains ESP's big priority.

ALEXI LAIHO

Guitar ace Alexi Laiho from Finland's Children of Bodom is one of the newest players in ESP's artist roster. He's at the vanguard of young guitarists who have reinvigorated interest in virtuoso shredding. "Guys like Alexi are bringing back the kind of playing that took a

back seat for a while," says Masciandaro. "For example, Steph Carpenter [of the Deftones] has been one of our big endorsees for 11 or 12 years, and he doesn't solo. That's just his thing. But now it's coming back around. It's refreshing to see guys like Alexi out there doing what they do. Alexi and Children of Bodom gained popularity in Japan and Europe before the U.S., so in 2003 he developed a relationship with the folks at ESP Japan, where the band was touring a lot at the time."

Actually, ESP's Japanese wing came to Laiho's rescue at a time of dire need. His only two guitars, a pair of Jackson Flying Vs, got stolen right

at the time when Jackson was changing hands, making it difficult for the guitarist to obtain suitable replacements in time to meet Children of Bodom's concert commitments.

"I had all these tours and gigs coming up, but I didn't have no goddamn guitars!" Laiho recalls. "ESP stepped in and said they could make new guitars for me. I gotta tell you, dude, I was very prejudiced against any other brand than Jackson. But ESP proved me wrong, and I'm glad they did."

First introduced in Japan, the ESP Alexi Laiho Signature Model is a classic metal-style asymmetrical Flying V. The guitar's initial color scheme—white with a geometric black pinstripe—was very much inspired by Randy Rhoads. Alexi's V is equipped with a Floyd Rose and a single, bridge-mounted EMG HZ H-4. He's definitely a one-pickup kind of guy. "I just like that 'mean' sound," he says, "that high-end thing. For metal, that's the perfect sound. When you're doing fast picking, I like that you can really hear that edge when the pick hits the string."

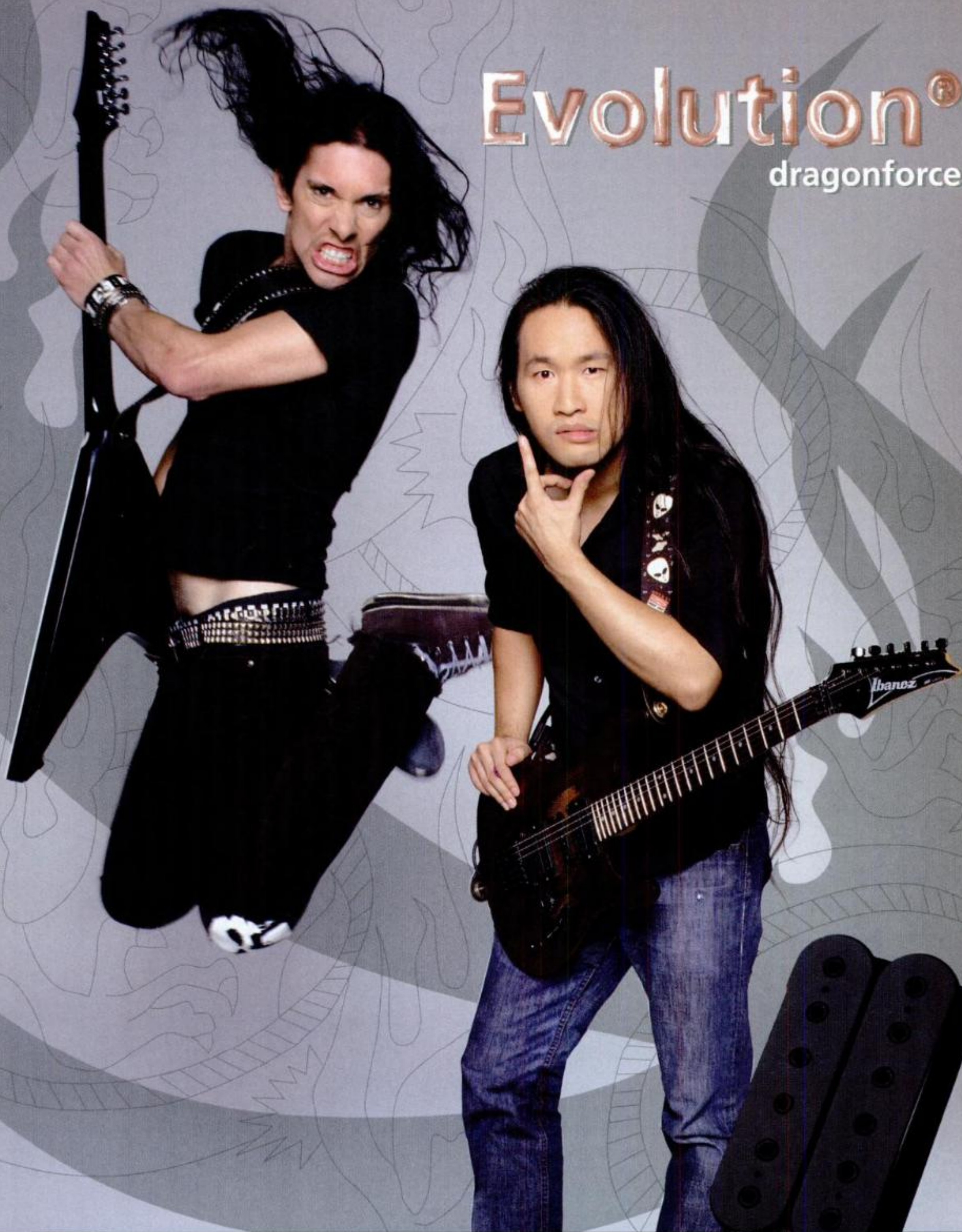
The EMG used in the Laiho signature model is one of the company's few passive pickups, but the guitar also has a built-in gain boost designed by a music shop in Finland that Laiho works with. "It's a gain boost like Dave Mustaine and the guys in Anthrax had," Laiho



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explains. "They used to have that killer guitar tone. I sussed that out and wanted to have it."

As for the guitar's neck, Laiho says, "I like it kind of thick, but super flat. I don't really like some of the Jackson and Ibanez necks that I've played before. I prefer the thickness of a Les Paul neck, for example."

On close inspection, the guitar's triangular "shark fin" fret markers turn out to have saw teeth, giving them an alarming resemblance to guillotine blades. "I remember that one of the Ibanez guitars—maybe it was the JEM—had one sawn edge in the fret markers," Laiho says. "But I figured, why have just one? So I told the guys at ESP maybe we could have sawed-off edges on the entire slanted surface. It was okay with them, and I think it looks cooler."

After the Alexi Laiho signature model had been doing well on the Japanese market for a few years, ESP U.S. decided that the time was right to introduce the guitar in the States. "In 2005, Alexi won a *Guitar World* readers' poll," says Masciandaro. "We took that as an important sign. We have a pretty good grip on what's going on here in the States. We watch the industry; we have contacts with the record labels. We had a good feel for what was going to happen with Alexi and his band, and now we're working very closely with him."

Next up will be a new color scheme for the guitar—a black body with a bold pink pinstripe. Alexi is pretty excited about it and was very specific about the shade of pink he wanted. "He picked out a Maybellene lip color called Fruit

Punch #409," says Masciandaro. "We're also going to airbrush the band logo, COBHC, on the back of the body in that color. Right now we're working on matching inlay material. You can paint a guitar any color, but you're kind of limited as to what you can make inlays out of. They don't offer inlay material in any shade of pink you want."

"We went through a bunch of shades and colors," Laiho adds. "I just wanted to have that Eighties, *Miami Vice* pink. I think black and pink go really well together. I got the idea from Twisted Sister. They had a black and pink thing going on. We were actually looking up colors on the internet. The guy who runs a guitar shop in Finland that I work with—his wife found a website that was all different shades of lipstick. We were just looking through, and I said, 'Yeah, that's the one.' When you go for something that's pink, you better make sure it's cool."

Pickups may be the next frontier. "I met with Alexi at NAMM recently," says Masciandaro, "and for the first time since we've been working with him, he said he wants to try different pickups. He wants to do something different with the electronics. I suggested moving to an active EMG. That might be a good starting point."

In the end, Masciandaro says his goal is to accommodate Laiho as fully as he does any other artist with whom he deals. "If a guy can play like Alexi, you gotta respect anything he asks for. You can't go to a guy like that and say, 'I think you're being a little too picky here. Why

does the neck shape matter that much?' With the kind of ability Alexi has, he's feeling things and he's got ears that most of us don't have."

Laiho, for his part, is happy with not only EMG's indulgence on his behalf but also the casual connection he has with Masciandaro and others at the company share. "So far, I have a good relationship with both the Japanese and the American companies. The dude from the American company, we just hang out and we don't necessarily talk guitars. We can toss back a couple of drinks and talk bullshit. It's that kind of relationship; it's not all official. And I think that's the way it should be."

Certainly, one of Laiho and Masciandaro's most recent conversations had nothing to do with guitars.

"Alexi called the other day and said, 'You're not gonna believe what happened.' He went bowling," Masciandaro recounts. "He got a strike and was so happy, he jumped up in the air. When he landed, he slipped and injured his shoulder. Now he can't play guitar for the next month." Masciandaro's concern for the guitarist gives some sense of the kind of paternal worries that beset the chief of a company whose whole business plan is based around close artist relations.

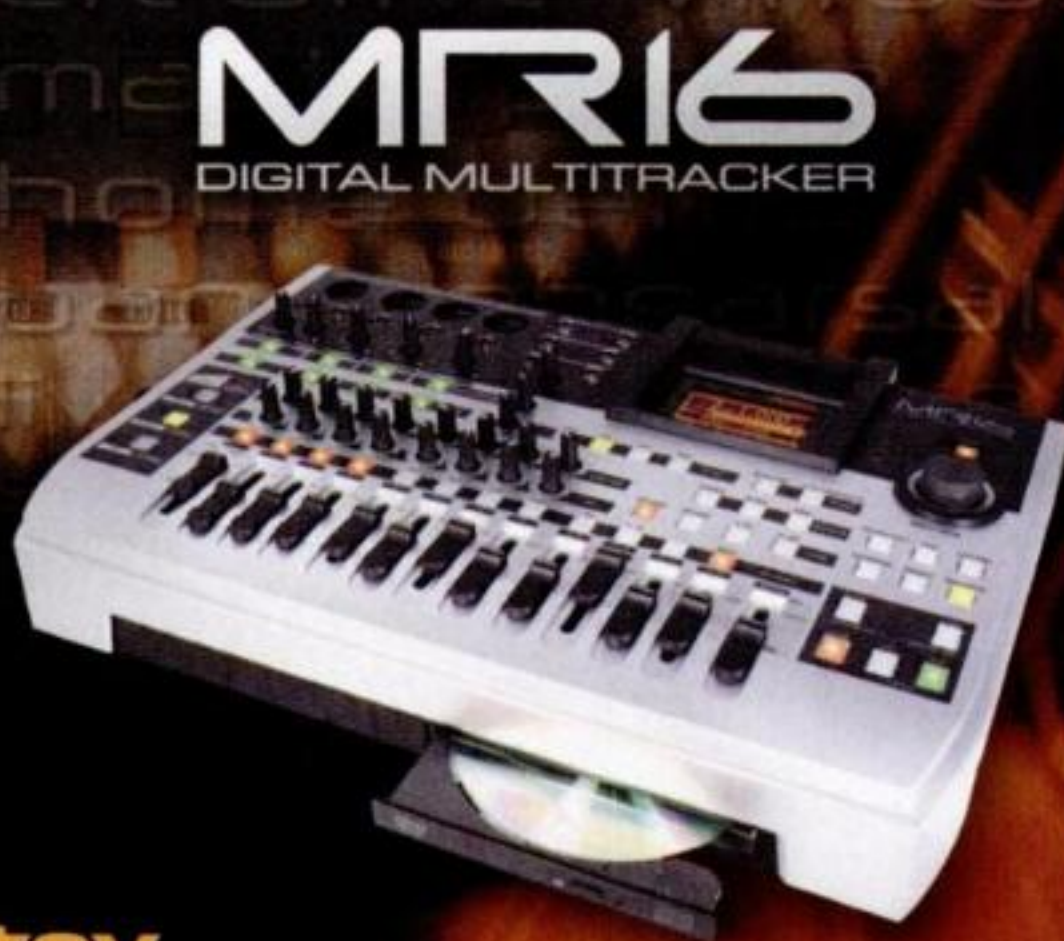
"I remember when I first met Alexi, one of his arms was in a cast. Now he's got issues with his right arm and shoulder. He's young and he's having a good time, I guess. He's the guitar god of the moment. Alexi has quite a future...as long as he quits breaking bones." ●

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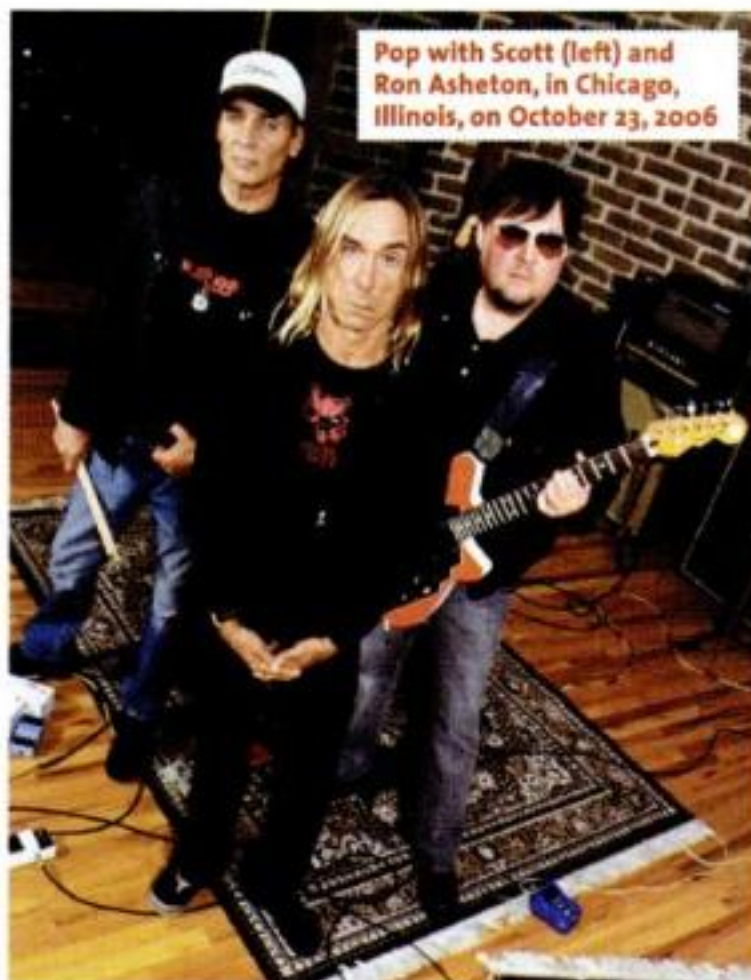
the studio and use it on those three songs.”

Recording the first Stooges album was a true rite of passage for Asheton, the Michigander's first-ever trip to New York City and his first time in a professional recording studio. The album went down to tape at the Hit Factory, soon to become a legendary studio but just getting started in 1969. “It was a little studio above a peep show and porn shop in New York,” Asheton recalls.

Elektra Records, the Stooges' label, had assigned John Cale to produce the band's debut disc. Cale was a Velvet Underground veteran, an arty, classically trained, viola-playing Welshman. He and the Stooges were not exactly on the same page.

“John Cale only got the job because it was his first assignment for Elektra Records as a staff producer,” Asheton says. “And of course they're gonna give the weird new producer the weird new band—see what he can do with these pieces of shit. I don't think that he really knew about us and what we were trying to get.”

Trouble began almost as soon as the Stooges dragged their Marshall stacks into the small studio. “We're playing, and John Cale comes out and says, ‘This isn't how it's done. This is a recording studio. You don't have stacks of Marshalls on 10!’ And Iggy goes, ‘This is how we play. This is our style. This is what we do.’ John Cale says, ‘No.’ He's trying to tell us to break the stacks in half, turn



Pop with Scott (left) and Ron Asheton, in Chicago, Illinois, on October 23, 2006

them down, all this stuff. So finally it came to a strike: ‘Stooges on strike!’ Iggy said, ‘If we can't do it our way, we're not doing anything.’

“So we went into the vocal booth. They happened to have a lot of cushions there. This was those hippie kind of times when everything was meditation and Indian tapestry. So we lit a candle, settled down on the cushions, broke out the old hash pipe and just sat around, refusing to work. Cale would come in and try to argue with us and we'd just ignore

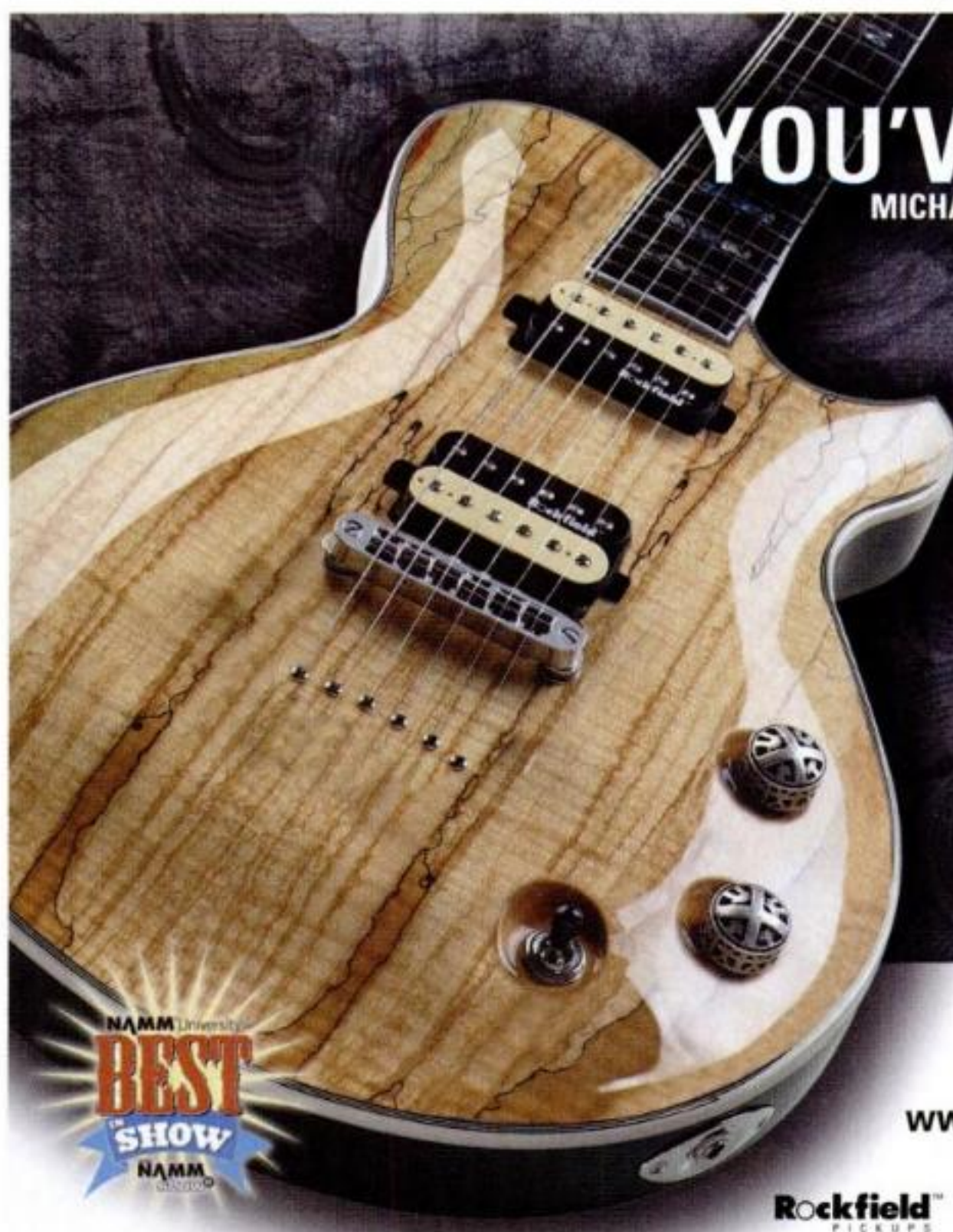
him. But finally we did come to a compromise because work had to be done. Time is money. So the compromise was that I'd use only one stack—that and, ‘Okay, I'll go from 10 to 9.’ Cale didn't really know what we were, but we got through the sessions and did what we wanted to do. In the end it worked out fine.”

Asheton's guitar was pushed far into the background on Cale's initial mixes of *The Stooges*' songs, but Iggy convinced Elektra chief Jac Holzman to join him in remixing the album, a move that thrust Asheton's gritty, grainy tone right into the listener's face. The guitarist plugged straight into his Marshall for some of the rhythm tracks, while on others, the ax was first routed through Asheton's Vox wah to produce an almost painfully trebly tone. The Fuzz Face was held in reserve for solos. Asheton's leads on “I Wanna Be Your Dog” and “No Fun” have a very saturated tone, with tons of sustain. It's a very garage-psych sound, almost like something off a Strawberry Alarm Clock record.

“It was all very unplanned,” says the guitarist. “It's fun going back and listening to those songs—hearing how the simple dynamics of being a little ignorant on your instrument lends itself to that kind of playing.”

Signed fairly early in their career, the Stooges barely had enough material for their first album, but it simply meant Asheton had room to stretch out in places, such as the extended fuzz wah solo in the Bo Diddly-ish “Little Doll.” In addition, Elektra encouraged the band to work their more open-ended live

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A photograph of Alexi Laiho, lead guitarist of Children of Bodom, performing on stage. He is wearing a black t-shirt with a graphic that says "Klamyd" and a tiger. He has long blonde hair and a goatee. He is playing a white electric guitar. The background is a warm, orange-red stage light.

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jams into more concise song structures, with the result that a track like "No Fun" sounds a little more poppy than it might have. The need to fill up two sides of long-playing vinyl may also have been a factor behind the droning, meditative "We Will Fall," a 10-minute track very much in the spirit of compositions like "The End" by Elektra label mates the Doors.

When it came out in August 1969, *The Stooges* was a challenging album. Was it a really inept psychedelic record or something completely fresh and new? Many of the hippie old guard denounced it roundly, but listeners a few years too young to have experienced the Summer of Love firsthand heard in its grooves the sound of the future. The record drew a line in the sand: you loved it or hated it. Although *The Stooges* was released at the tail end of the Sixties, it really belongs to the decade that was to come.

The Stooges were in a somewhat stronger position when they went in to make their second disc, 1970's *Fun House*. Touring behind their debut had rendered them a fit and fearsome musical unit, and as a songwriter, Iggy had developed a keen intuition for vibing off Asheton's guitar riffs. *Fun House* was named for a big old barn that the Stooges had adopted as their collective residence and party space, dubbing it the Fun House. Ron Asheton can still recall the morning he sat in the Fun House kitchen and came up with the killer guitar riff for the Stooges classic "T.V. Eye."

"Iggy was upstairs on the third level. He

had a little corner room in the attic that was very nice. It had pine paneling, a bed, table and chairs. He came down and said, 'I like that riff!' and we got the song going. It just had a nice groove. I used the open A string as a drone to make up for the lack of other instruments, the Stooges being just a three-piece band, instrumentally. As soon as we play that one live, you start seeing all the heads banging."

Fun House was recorded at Elektra's in-house studio in Hollywood. It was Asheton's first time in Los Angeles, and he and the band quickly took to the easygoing hedonism of L.A. life. "Weed was cheap, and it was easy to meet people," Asheton recalls. The band stayed at the Tropicana, the infamous, sleazy, rock and roll hotel on Santa Monica Boulevard. "We moved the couch one day and found a blackjack [a handheld striking weapon] under there," Asheton reminisces. "And my brother goes, 'Dude, it's a real blackjack!'"

The Doors maintained a business office at the Tropicana, and during the *Fun House* sojourn, the Stooges were very much in the shadow of the legendary L.A. band. By that point, Jim Morrison was starting to sink into his fat, bearded period; Iggy was, in some ways, seen as the new Morrison—a shirtless, self-destructive rock hellion. Little did the Stooges realize they hadn't escaped Morrison's attention either.

"There was a mirror in the studio at Elektra," Asheton recounts. "We'd all go and kinda groom there. What we didn't know at the time was that it was actually a two-way

mirror with a room behind. This was so record executives could come and spy on you, apparently. And years later [*Doors manager*] Danny Sugarman told me that Jim Morrison used to come in and watch what we were doing in the studio. I'm glad I didn't know back then. I would have been a nervous wreck."

For *Fun House*, the Stooges were teamed with perhaps a more sympathetic producer than they'd had the first time out. Don Gallucci came out of the same trashy, garage band musical culture that had inspired the Stooges in their youth. Gallucci had produced the Kingsmen's immortal garage classic recording of "Louie Louie." And he'd fronted Don and the Goodtimes, the house band on the mid-Sixties teen rock TV show *Where the Action Is*.

"I used to watch that every afternoon," Asheton says enthusiastically. "So it was really cool for me knowing that he was Little Donnie from Don and the Goodtimes. Although I remember him saying in the studio, 'Don't call me Little Donnie!' He wore a suit every day. He was impeccably groomed and very friendly."

Gallucci may have worn a suit, but he was no square. He'd been to several of the Stooges shows and realized that live performance was the key to the band's entire sound and aesthetic. Gallucci arranged for *Fun House* to be recorded live in the studio and stripped the recording room of all carpets, cushions and other soft hippie trappings to achieve a crisper, more reverberant room sound. A P.A. system was set up in the room so that Iggy

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could sing live with the band as the tracks went down to tape.

Asheton's guitar tone on *Fun House* is a little tighter and cleaner than his sound on *The Stooges*; it's a little more reverberant and slightly less reliant on distortion. "I'd gone back to the Stratocaster and I'd switched to a 50-watt Marshall instead of a 100," he explains. "And instead of two 4x12 cabs, I now had what I called 'the refrigerator,' which was a taller box that had six 10s in it. The 10s are a little brighter. For effects I was still using just the Fuzz Face and the Vox wah. Also, all the months we'd spent on the road playing made us tighter. We came off the road and I think we had only two weeks off before we came to L.A. and started recording."

No longer obliged to fit their material into concise song structures, the Stooges were able to jam out a little more on *Fun House*. There's something in their handling of the album's extended grooves that's akin to funk or soul, albeit expressed in a more rock and roll way.

"We always loved James Brown and all kinds of R&B," Asheton confirms. "The Stooges always listened to all kinds of music. We weren't focused on English sounds, or the San Francisco or L.A. sound. In fact, the song 'Fun House' was a little jam on a riff that Dave Alexander came up with. It was a fun riff for improvising on and playing with dynamics. And that all comes out of loving people like [R&B duo] Sam and Dave."

Though they're often painted as rock and roll primitives, the Stooges were always a

more eclectic lot than most people realized. Very early on, they'd experimented with making abstract *musique concrète* noise using found objects. Avant-garde jazz was another big influence. But again, all these diverse musical currents got filtered through the off-the-map perspective of Detroit, a city that always had a strange biracial legacy anyway.

Free-jazz leanings were definitely a factor in taking saxophonist Steve McKay into the band and including him on *Fun House*. "We knew Steve from Michigan," says Asheton. "We'd hung out and partied with him a lot. And besides loving John Coltrane, we also really liked the sax on the Doors song 'Touch Me.' It was actually Iggy's idea to bring a saxophone onboard. Steve had already been playing with us live before we went to L.A., so we had him do just a couple of numbers on the record: 'Fun House' and '1970.'"

The freeform sensibility emerges most clearly on the album's wildly improvisational closing track, "L.A. Blues." "At the end of our live show we would usually just freak out like that," Asheton explains. "The only thing that was a little awkward about doing that track in the studio is that we were used to being all worked up onstage. And that freak-out would usually come out of the last song. In the studio we had to start off cold, but we had a good time doing it. We didn't know what to name it on the record. I was the one who said, 'How about "L.A. Blues?"' And everyone liked that."

Unfortunately, life in L.A.'s fast lane agreed with some members of the Stooges a little too

much. During the *Fun House* sessions, serious heroin use crept into the band; the end was not far down the road. In these final throes of the Stooges' first coming, they decided to add a second guitar player. It was Asheton who brought in James Williamson, another Michigan buddy who'd actually played one Chosen Few gig with Asheton back in the garage days. Little did Ron know that the man he'd recruited into the band would soon supplant him.

Williamson formed a close bond with Iggy. Shortly after the Stooges disbanded, David Bowie took Iggy under his wing, and soon after, the former Stooge signed as a solo artist with MainMan, the management company that handled Bowie. Iggy brought Williamson with him to London to record the album that would become *Raw Power*. For a while, it appeared that Ron and Scott Asheton would be left out in the cold, but when Iggy couldn't find a suitable rhythm section in London, he sent for the brothers. This revamped lineup now bore the name Iggy and the Stooges. Ron had to content himself with playing a smaller role: once the Stooges' guitar man, he was now on bass; formerly the riff machine at the core of Stooges songwriting, he was permitted no input into *Raw Power*'s songcraft.

Released in 1973, *Raw Power* is the only recording to feature the Asheton brothers as a rhythm section. "My brother still says how much he enjoyed playing with a bassist who knew how to play off his kick drum," Ron says. "Throughout *Raw Power*, Iggy was always

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saying, 'Just do this for now and then we'll get you back on guitar down the road apiece.' But that's not what James wanted. He wanted to have a piano player and he didn't want another guitar player. It really started going down for me when I wasn't allowed to write any songs or really suggest anything. I just came up with some bass lines that wound up in some of the bootlegs, like 'The She Creatures of the Hollywood Hills.' I just felt not a part of it. And by then we'd all started withdrawing from each other."

Asheton played on Iggy and the Stooges' swansong, *Metallic K.O.*, a low-fi document of the band's semidisastrous final gig, which took place, fittingly, in Detroit. A few years later, in the mid-to-late-Seventies punk era, Ron resurfaced at the helm of the New Order (not to be confused with British electronic group New Order) and then Destroy all Monsters, while Scott joined former MC5 guitarist Fred "Sonic" Smith in Sonic's Rendezvous band. The brothers didn't get back together with Iggy until the latter's 2003 album *Skull Ring*. Shortly after the disc was released, the Ashetons joined Iggy and bassist Mike Watt onstage on the 2003 Coachella Festival in the California desert. The Stooges were back in business.

"Coachella was the beginning of getting everything back together," says Asheton. "I thought it was just gonna be a one-off show, kinda to promote *Skull Ring*. But after the show I was standing around with Watt, and Iggy came up to Watt and said, 'Hey, would

you be interested or available to play more shows this year?'"

The reconstituted Stooges have been performing and touring on and off ever since. When they were off the road, Ron and Scott would get together in a small room at Iggy's place in Florida to write the songs that would go to make *The Weirdness*.

"My brother actually used a toy drum set that he found in the window of a toy store," Ron says. "It was killing his back to bend over and play it, but it's amazing how good it sounded. You'll hear it if we ever put out the practice tapes. I had a little 10-watt Marshall with an eight-inch speaker. Iggy just sang out of an Ampeg amp with one 12 in it. And we sat around this tiny room, not bigger than somebody's dining room in a little apartment. I'd just come up with guitar riffs and Iggy would say, 'Go on that one. I like that.' He'd go outside with his pad and pen and come back with some lyrics and start singing right away. Usually I'd try to come up with three or four ideas a day, but toward the end I set some crazy goals, like, 'I want to come away with 12 new things before we're done today.' And I did. We had a stockpile of stuff."

Various producers were under consideration to help usher the Stooges reunion album into existence. Rick Rubin and Jack White were on the short list, but the gig went to Steve Albini, who'd been recommended to Ron Asheton by the singer Dara from the Michigan rock band His Name Is Alive. In

many ways, Albini was the perfect choice. He'd come up during the grunge/alternative Nineties, an era whose gritty aesthetic was very much akin to the Stooges' own raw approach. Albini is famous for his no-nonsense, documentary, live-in-the-studio recording philosophy, which he combines with an almost obsessive attention to details like microphone selection and placement.

Albini decided to record the Stooges in much the same way Don Gallucci had. He set them up inside his Chicago studio and had them blast out the tunes just as they would in concert, with Iggy singing along.

"I'd say 98 percent of Iggy's vocals on the album were sung live with the band," says Asheton. "But this time I didn't want to play the guitar solos live like I did on *Fun House*, so I went back and overdubbed the solos and some rhythm tracks as well. The idea was to do two songs a day. As soon as we completed a basic track, I'd put the solos on. I'd have two passes. By the end of the day, when we'd drive back to the hotel in our van, we'd get to hear the day's work. It was cool, 'cause you'd feel, 'Gee, this song is done.' You didn't have to worry about overdubs and things like that."

Over the years, many of the vintage mid-Sixties Strats that Asheton played with the Stooges have disappeared under mysterious circumstances, many last seen in the company of light-fingered roadies. His Marshalls are gone, too. "I've got a whole different setup now," he says. "I use Reverend guitars, made

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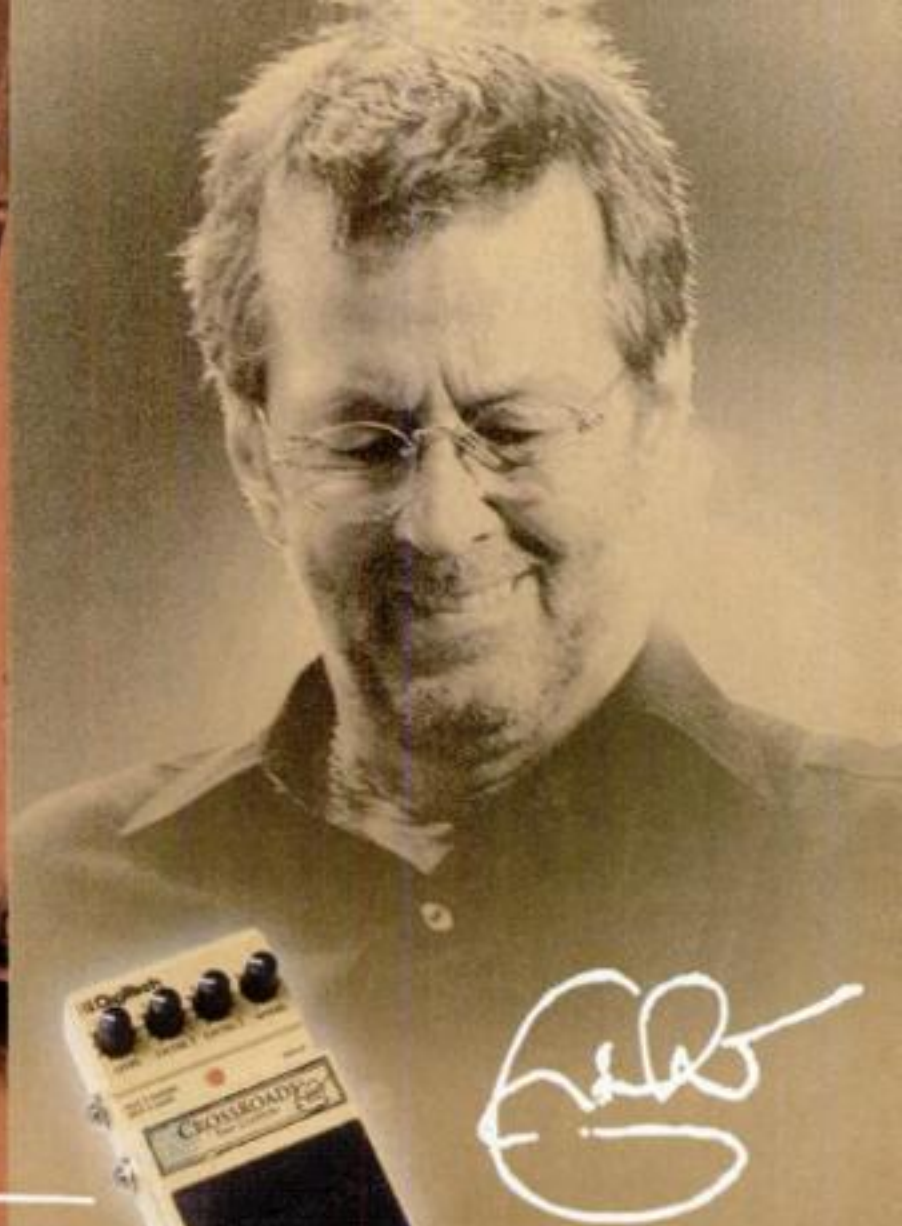


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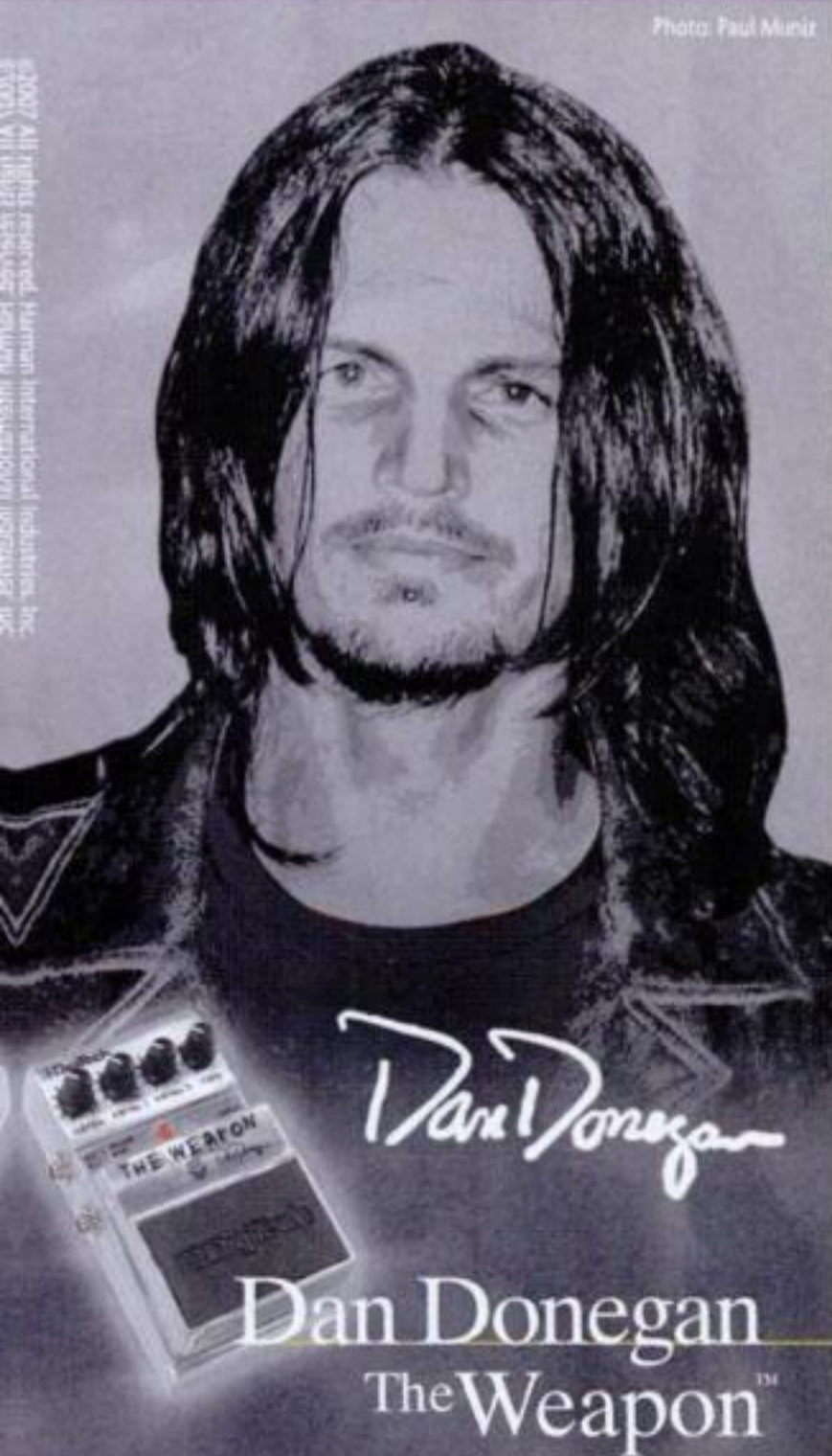


Eric Clapton

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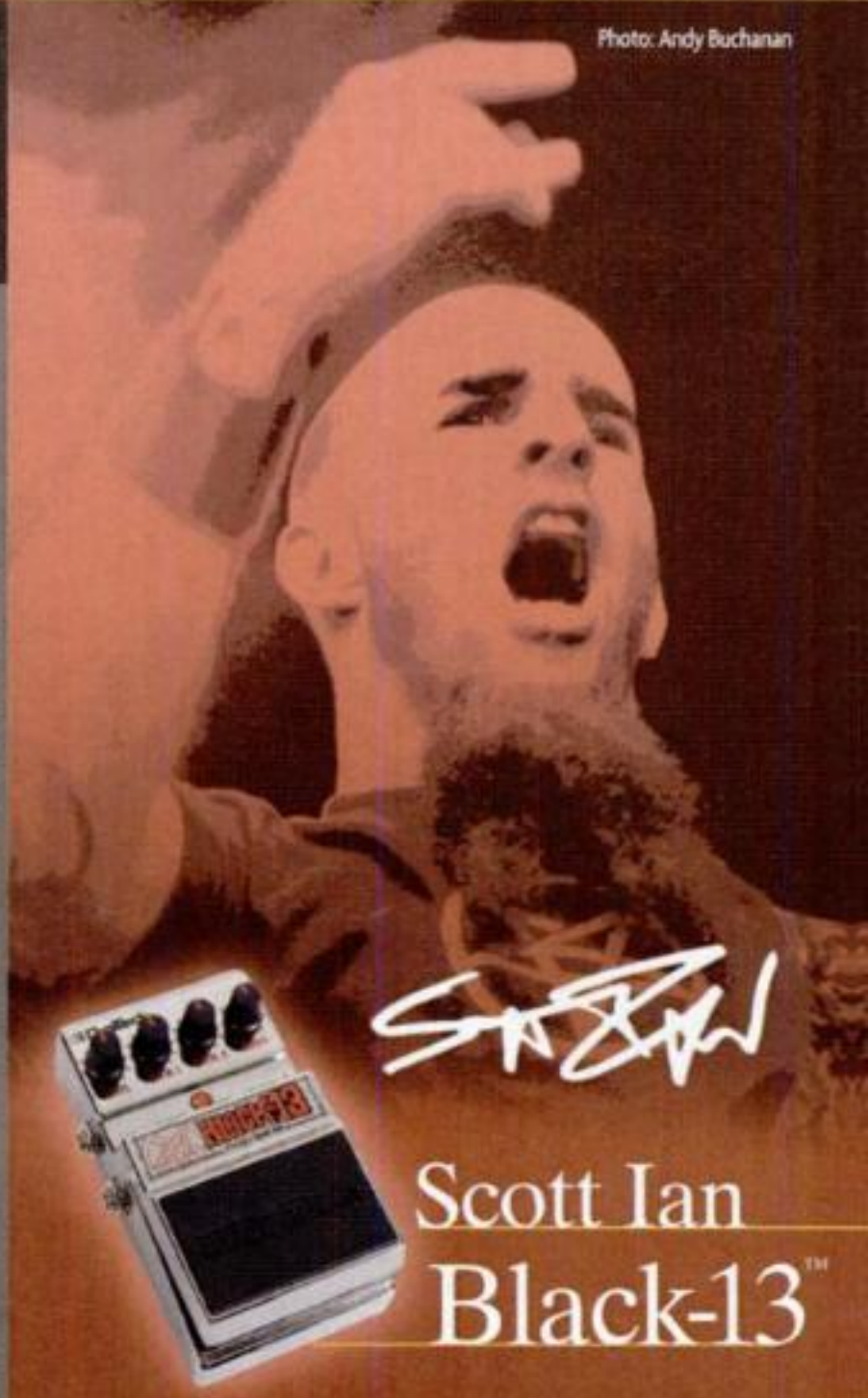
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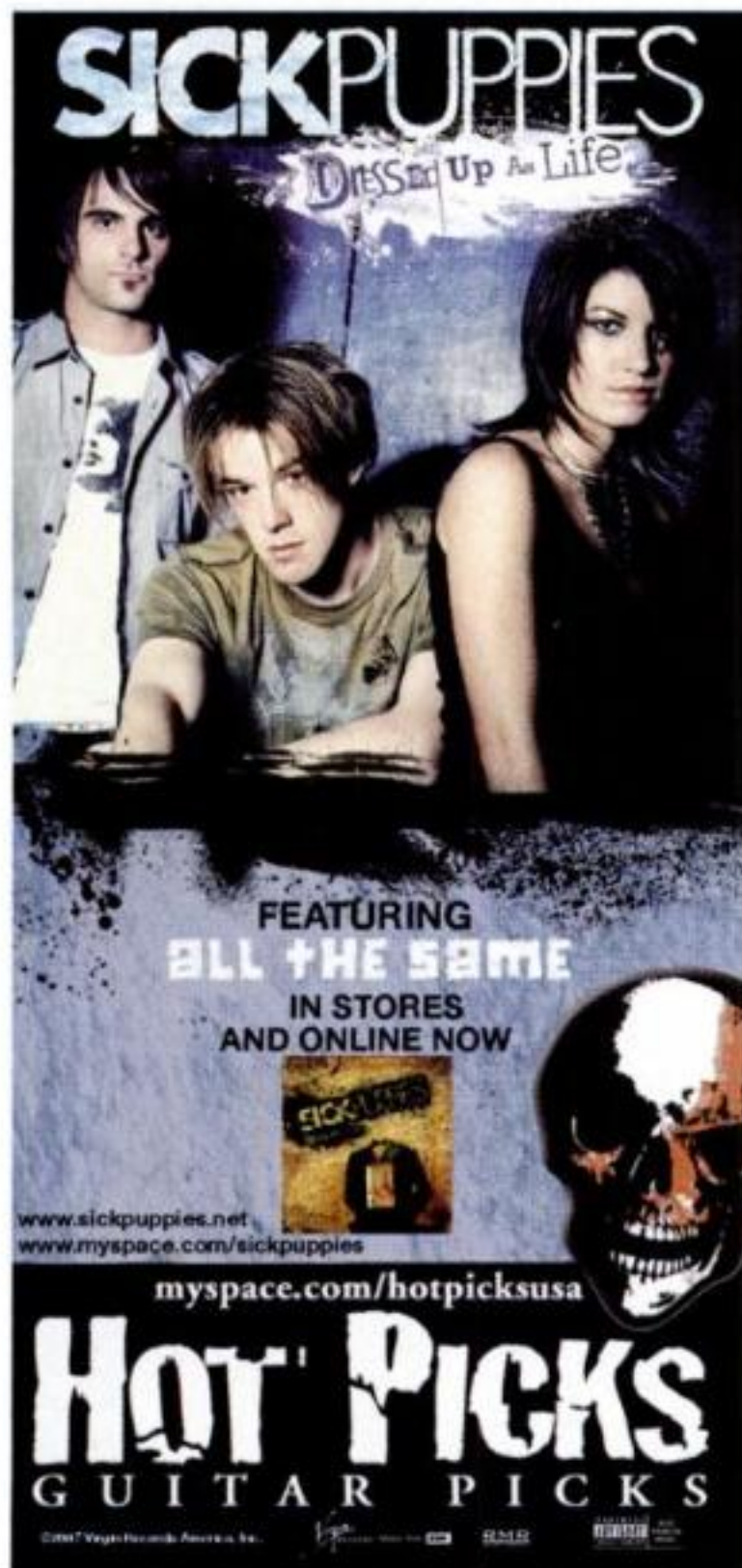


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by Joe Naylor right here in Warren, Michigan. It's a homegrown product, a fantastic guitar. It's still in the vein of what I liked about the Stratocaster. Joe made me some guitars with single-coil pickups and some with P90s. I used the single-coils to make the new Stooges record. I took a lot of guitars down to the studio and went through a bunch of them, and Iggy was saying, 'Nope, don't sound like us. Nope, don't like that guitar sound.' And when I went back to the guitars with the Strat pickup, he said, 'Yup, that sounds like Stooges.'"

Asheton also used Naylor amps for the sessions. "I don't think Joe is making amplifiers any more, but I have a couple of Naylor's that I got about eight or 10 years ago. It's that same Marshall type of sound. For the album we used an 80-watt Naylor with a 4x12 cabinet and then a 38-watt combo with two 12s. We miked both of those up and used them in combination. That was an awesome sound. Steve Albini had a few different mic setups. You could have one that was more of a room sound. The other was just the mic sticking straight into the speaker."

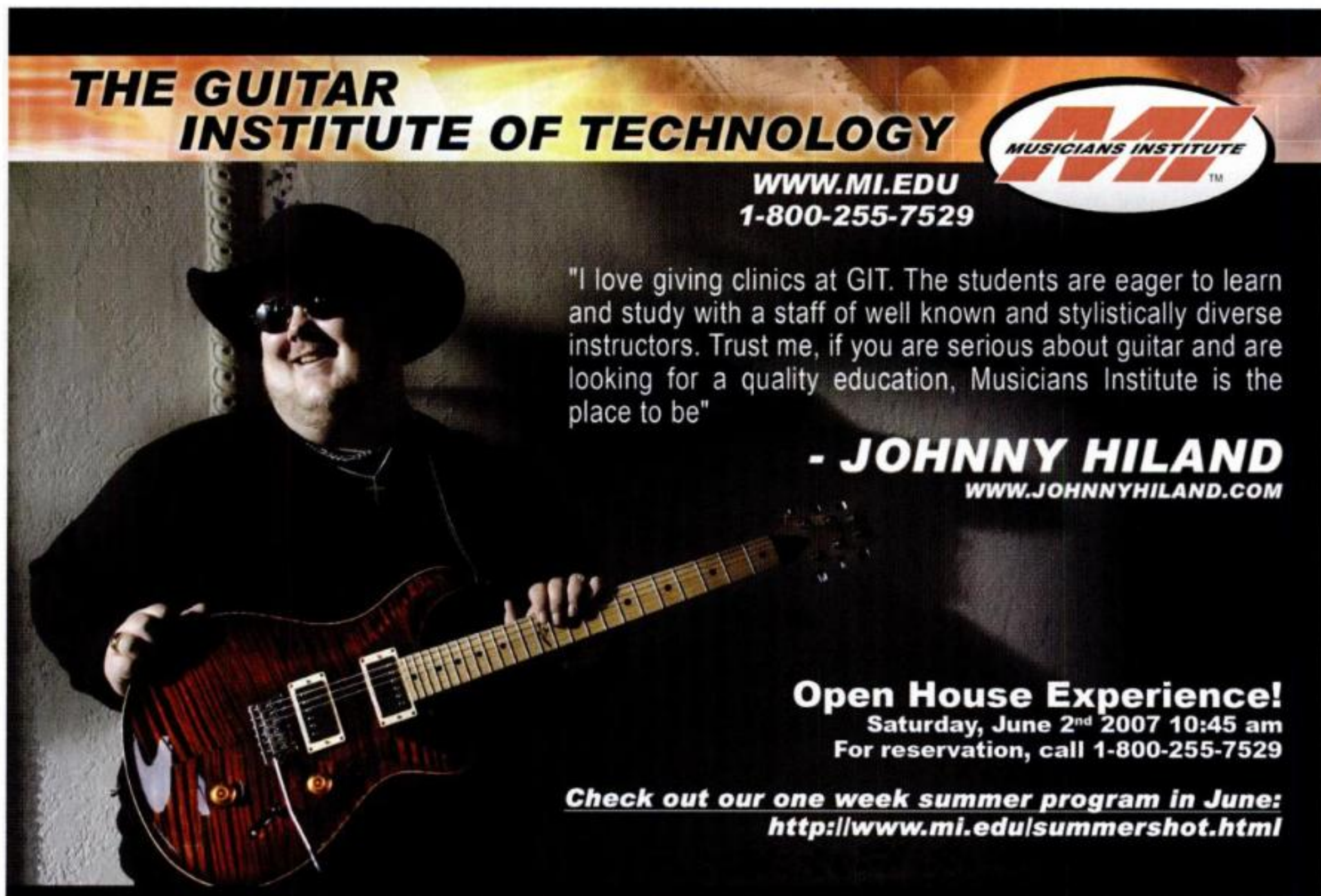
More bruising selections like "Trollin'" and the title track favored the big 80-watt Naylor more heavily in the blend, whereas slightly less overdriven rhythms on songs like "ATM" feature more of the 38-watt combo. "And 'Awful Green People' was just the 38-watt," Asheton says. "It's that thinner sound. Sometimes I'd just fiddle around on guitar and Albini would come into the room and start playing with the amp dials. I'd let him. What was cool about

working with him was you didn't have to tell him what to do. He'd go ahead and come up with a sound and it would be good. It's his studio and he knows his equipment very well."

On a handful of tracks, including "Free and Freaky," "Mexican Guy" and "End of Christianity," Asheton overdubbed an overdriven Gibson lap steel. "That became the standard joke around the studio," he says. "The guys would say, 'You gonna use that Hawaiian guitar again?' I'd say, 'It's not a Hawaiian guitar, it's a laptop guitar.' I only used it as a reinforcement, very sparingly. I got it a few years ago. Originally, I seriously got on the internet and looked at real pedal steel guitars. But as we got closer to the recording date I realized, 'I don't know exactly what to do with all those pedals.' So I thought I'd go for something simpler. It just sits on your lap, open tuned, and you play it with a metal bar. I did all of those overdubs through the big Naylor amp."

"The End of Christianity" and "The Weirdness" each feature outro guitar leads that started life as backing vocal lines. "Iggy got into a thing where he was going to go find some black gospel singers to sing that line in 'The Weirdness,'" Asheton explains. "But the reality of being in the studio and not wanting to waste time knocking on church doors made him say to me, 'You just play it on guitar.'"

Probably a wise choice. The Stooges have never been much of a "gospel choir" act. Like a fine whiskey, they're best taken straight—undiluted and kicking like a mule. ■



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outs, but "Goin' Down" has more of a tight arrangement. You get 16 bars for a solo and that's it. When we're done killing it, we move on to the next freak-out.

PAUL GILBERT It took me a while to get to the point where I could connect in a jam. Like a lot of guitar players, I tend to be very individual and do my own thing. Also, in the heavy metal world, you tend not to do things that are spontaneous. You rehearse a song and make it perfect so it's like a military operation. But finally, as a result of giving guitar lessons and having so many different experiences with the guitar, I was able to get into that part of guitar where you can share and communicate with other players. And now we get to do that every night. It's been great.

JOHN PETRUCCI Jamming was a big part of the way I grew up learning to play guitar. I just happened to grow up in a place called King's Park [Long Island, New York] where everybody played music in my neighborhood. There were so many bands and they were all different. There were guys who were into the Scorpions, guys who were into Rush, guys who were into the Dead or into the blues. And on any given day you could get a call, "Hey John, you wanna do a three-hour blues jam?" That's how it was for me all through junior high and high school when I was learning guitar and playing in different bands. But since those early days, jamming isn't something I do much anymore.

Because, like Paul said, you have your band and it's a set thing. You write material and you rehearse it. Don't get me wrong: Dream Theater does incorporate improvisation into its live shows. But to do what we're doing on G3—three guys trading riffs on rock and roll, Hendrix and blues—it really brings me back to those early days. So I'm just smiling the whole time.

GW Since we're on the topic of jamming, I thought maybe we could generate a list of the Top Five Rock Guitar Clichés.

SATRIANI The ones we play or the ones we avoid? [laughs] Our own clichés or other people's?

GW Oh, other people's. I'm not asking you to confess your sins.

SATRIANI I think that if you play rock music, the top cliché is that Albert King jumping-off point and returning point.

GW You mean the lick that Clapton appropriated in "Strange Brew"?

SATRIANI All of that. Just the whole minor pentatonic box. We're all guilty. Albert King's been completely raided. We took his upside-down architecture and made it into a right-handed thing. [King was a left-handed guitarist who played right-handed guitars in an open D minor tuning.] And everyone just worked off that. That's the one thing that I've always heard, playing with everyone over 11 years of G3. If we share anything, it's that little Albert King thing that everyone has agreed to steal and never talk about.

GILBERT I think one of the worst clichés is not stopping. If you're a rock guitar player, you tend to have a lot of distortion. And if you

stop, bad things start happening. The amp starts hissing and buzzing. But if you continue to play, the notes are louder than the noise. So guitar players tend to be the opposite of singers or horn players, who have to breathe. That's one thing that I've always admired about a composition like [Satriani's] "Always with You, Always with Me": It breathes. There are stops. I think one of the first times I realized this was when I learned the solo from [Mountain's] "Mississippi Queen," one of my favorite heavy metal songs and probably the first heavy metal song I learned in my life. And in the solo on that, there are stops everywhere.

GW Of course. That's where the drama is: in the pauses.


PETRUCCI I don't have the ability to stop. [laughs] No idea at all. I play with way too much gain.

GW Alright, now John has to contribute a cliché to the list.

PETRUCCI You mean like a lick type of cliché?

GW Anything. I'll share one of mine: inappropriate two-handed tapping. Recently I saw this British Invasion All-Stars show, and the Zombies played "Time of the Season." Rod Argent does his signature organ solo; then it's the guitar player's turn. It wasn't the Zombies' original guitar player, incidentally. And the guy, completely inappropriately, starts doing two-handed tapping. For one, he did it poorly. Secondly, it was flagrantly unsuited to the style of the song.

SATRIANI I would have to agree that when two-handed tapping has no compositional



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value, it really sucks. A lot of us started out doing tapping, but people in the know quickly realized that they didn't sound like themselves anymore once they started tapping; you just sound like anybody once you start doing that. Eddie Van Halen proved that it's all about the song. Listen to "Eruption." That's a piece of music there. It's got the tapping thing, but foremost it's a composition with a message. So you're right. Tapping is so revealing as being a cheap trick. Not to say we're beyond cheap thrills!

PETRUCCI When we're jamming and someone does something like that, it's like hitting a search engine in your head. What do I have left? Where's my sweep arpeggio move? So whoever starts that, you know the other guys are gonna follow you. "Oh yeah? Look what I got." But at the other end of the spectrum, you know a cliché that always finds its way into a jam at least once is that Chuck Berry riff. You can't have a jam without it.

GILBERT One of the reasons why that riff works is because it's easy to play in time. One of the curses of the fast guitar player, one that I struggle with, is this: If you learn to play really fast, you can let the drummer take care of the rhythm and tempo of the song. As long as you're playing most of the right notes, you can whip up and down scales and it sounds fairly exciting. But if you take enough care and time to actually lock into the groove at whatever tempo you're playing, whether it's fast or slow, it has so much more emotional and musical impact. I find if I just pick some good eighth or even quarter notes and play

them real hard and choose just the right ones, people go, "Oh, these are good vibrations."

GW Rhythm gets the hips moving.

GILBERT So that Chuck Berry riff is one of the best ones musically. It locks in. It's got a chordal thing going on with two strings barred and another string that's bending. It's very guitar-ish, a really useful lick. When I'm teaching, it's so hard to teach people that the licks that work well in context aren't necessarily that glamorous out of context.

PETRUCCI Right, that's so true!

GILBERT I've come offstage and realized, The best lick I played tonight is the one that, if I showed it to a student, he'd say, "I really don't care. I want to learn the one that goes *brrrrr-uurrrr*." Whereas, onstage, that fast lick might thrill the guitar buffs in the first row. But it doesn't make the neck do this [performs "head-banging" move].

GW That's something else I thought we might get into. Can you share some dead-easy guitar moves guaranteed to make the audience whoop and pump their fists in the air?

GILBERT Hit the ADA Flanger pedal. It goes *whuuooaahhwuhooaah*. Put your hands in the air.

PETRUCCI The Eddie move: play any sort of pinch harmonics really high and then bring the whammy bar down. It's like the sound of a horse. That always gets a smile. And Joe's got one that I really love when it sounds like a harmonica. The other day I happened to be listening to a blues station and I said, "Wow, that's what Joe does. It's like a harmonica!"

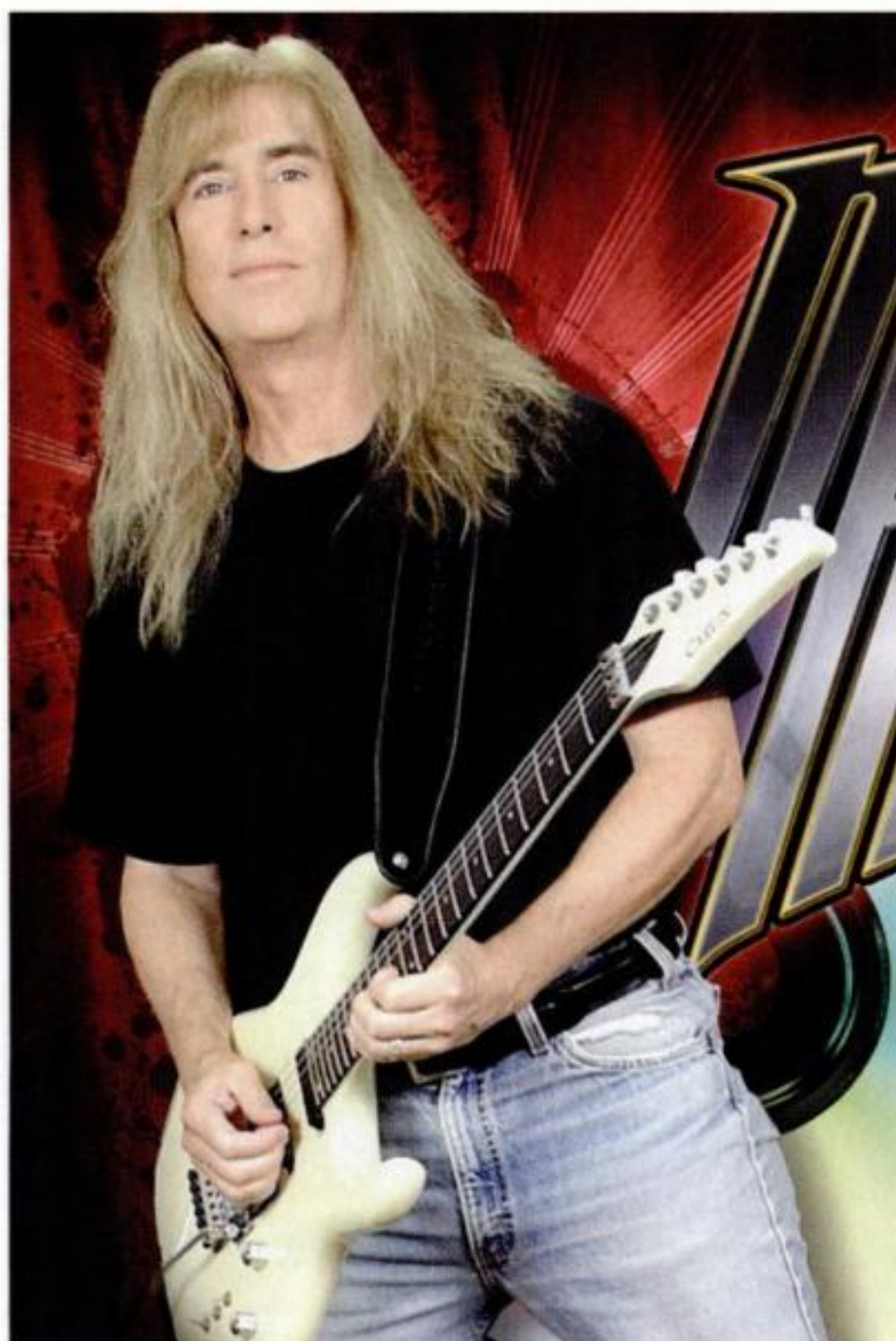
SATRIANI That's probably my Charlie Musselwhite riff. [Musselwhite is a prominent blues harmonica player.] One of the cool things about playing the guitar is when you have two strings ringing and there's a little bit of sustain going on, you don't have to make any effort to stop one string from ringing while you're picking the other string. That move is just this little minor third interval that I'm bending up to a fifth and a flat seventh, which is what a blues harmonica player does. I got that move just from playing harmonica. I also love that thing harp players do then they use their tongue to break up the notes.

GW Another topic I thought we might discuss is composition. Paul recently released his first guitar instrumental album ever, and in the press release for the disc, he talks about initially not knowing how to approach writing for the album. In vocal music, you create variety in the second and third verses by changing the lyric. But what do you do with a guitar if there is no vocal or lyrics? Maybe each of you can discuss how you conceptualize when you write instrumentals. Are you thinking verses and choruses? Are you thinking movements?

GILBERT I'm really interested in this, because I still don't know what to do!

PETRUCCI On a simple level, compositionally, the way I look at music is like jazz: there's the head [of the song, where the theme is established], there's the improv and then there's the head again. That's the simplest way I can look at it.

SATRIANI It's always different for me. Every song starts with an inspiration—a story, fantasy



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or emotion—and it reveals itself as the melody moves. Maybe the melody just wants to charge forward and end up with a resolution, like on “Flying in a Blue Dream.” That’s a long, long, melody, and the last few notes are the chorus. There is no chorus in the song per se, but that resolution functions as a chorus. Or maybe it’s a song like “Satch Boogie,” where there is no melody. [laughs] It’s an ensemble part that I’m imitating. Or maybe it is a more traditional structure like “Super Colossal,” where there are verses, a chorus and a solo section that functions like a bridge, taking the song somewhere else.

Sometimes you do realize, Wow this is gonna need some verses. Like “Summer Song” was a very big problem that way. The song felt like it wanted three verses, but how was I gonna do three instrumental verses and make each one different? In a situation like that, you just look at your resources: What pedals do you have? Can you play the melody an octave higher or lower? And then there’s just the way you express it. You never know what’s going to work. Some songs thrive on repetition, but others don’t.

GILBERT Since you’ve made a lot of records, is writing getting easier? Do you find that you’re able to predict the patterns more easily?

SATRIANI If I think that, then later on I realize it was a dangerous assumption. I often find myself having to abandon songs like that at the end of the recording process; we’ve run out of time and money and I still feel like the verse isn’t right. I fret less over solos than over verses. Sometimes I’m afraid of what Paul was

talking about earlier: that I’ve filled up too many spaces and it doesn’t sound like a verse anymore. It just sounds like some guitarist playing guitar when the singer wasn’t singing. And I know you can’t have that.

PETRUCCI That’s the thing I love about Joe’s music and approach to guitar playing: there’s always some creative and original way that he’s playing the melody. For me, doing solo instrumental work is a changing of hats because I’ve been in Dream Theater for 20 years, and in Dream Theater we all write music collectively. So when I’m writing by myself, I miss that community of five guys being there as a sounding board. But I find myself drawing inspiration from two people in particular: one being Joe and the other being Steve Morse, who’s a big hero of mine. When I hear something of Joe’s, as a guitar player, I say, “Wow that was really impressive.” But I love the songs, too. That’s how it is with any classic guitar hero, like Hendrix or Jimmy Page. It’s the music of Hendrix or Led Zeppelin that sticks in your head.

GW Well, is all that edifying, Paul?

GILBERT Those things help. Hearing Joe talk about how each song is its own case is reassuring. But I think one of the challenges I had in trying to play instrumentally is that I was used to the conversation that happens between the singer and the guitar player when you’re doing vocal music. The vocalist sings a line, and then the guitar comes in as an answer to that. Even if it’s two guitarists playing together, it’s nice to have that other person speaking, not to just have

a monologue. And if it is a monologue, which it is on my record because I’m the only guitar player, you have to compose things in such a way that the musical parts contrast with one another.


On the first couple of songs on my album, I used a flanger and just scratched the strings, simply to have something as a break from the notes. ‘Cause, once again, my habit is I can’t stop. If you look at a transcription of the first couple of songs on the record, it’s all eighth notes, say, and the eighth notes don’t stop. What I like about that is it’s a little bit like Bach. He tends to do that. But as I listener I love to have the rhythms broken up, to have not only eighth notes or only 16th notes, but an artful combination of them. That’s something I want to explore. So I’ve been taking lessons from a very good teacher recently trying to stop this endless stream of notes and create more rhythmic variety.

PETRUCCI I think it’s so important what we’re talking about here. There are so many guitar players in the world who can do amazingly frightening things on the guitar, but in the end it’s about the composition. So it’s great to hear Paul talking about what he thinks about and goes through in creating his music: the perfect blend of melody, technique, structure and groove. The fact that he puts so much thought into that is so important. You can’t just get three wankers up there. It has to be interesting.

GILBERT That would be W3!

PETRUCCI In the end it has to move people. People have to connect, or else it’s just a bunch of nothing.

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GILBERT And fortunately, the guitar is such a great instrument for moving people. There's so much more to it than the notes. You can bend strings and really unpredictable things happen because it is an electric guitar and you've got feedback possibilities. I love the organic quality of the guitar and its variety of sounds. It's such a beautiful instrument. We've all been playing a long time and I recently celebrated my 30th anniversary of being a guitar player. So I'm really happy to be on the most maniacal, beautiful, wonderful guitar tour there is: G3.

SATRIANI We should talk about "The Echo Song" from Paul's new album. I was exhilarated and very depressed when I heard that! When I was working on my last record, one of the things I was really hot on was a song built around repeat echoes and setting the delay in a clever way. I tried really hard for a couple of days and really hated what I'd done. Then I got Paul's record and I said, "Oh that's how you do it! You work it out ahead of time."

GILBERT You write in a closet-sized apartment in Japan with nothing else to do for three months.

SATRIANI I love that. Part of me is fascinated with how you did it. I'm sure it took a lot of work. But then again, part of that song's appeal is that it just sounds tossed out, like Paul wasn't even trying—which, as artists, is what we want. We want it to seem like the music is just flying out of our minds.

PETRUCCI It's like watching a great actor. You don't want to see the technique. You just want to believe that the guy really is the character he's meant to be portraying.

GW What do you guys make of what's going on in metal now? It seems like there's a real return of chops guitar. Children of Bodom, Dragonforce, Lamb of God...these guys are really playing at a high level again.

PETRUCCI I think it's great and I also think it's inevitable. Like it or not, if you're playing metal at a fast pace, you have to have technique. You can't fake that double-bass drumming and those 16th notes on the guitar. It's just inevitable that guys who can play that will work out some interesting instrumental parts and solos. I love it. I'm all about that. The band I'm in, we're prog-metal, so I love hearing younger bands do it too. The more the merrier.

GILBERT It's appealing in an extreme sports kind of way. [laughs] For a long time in the Nineties, the young kids were not into that kind of thing. They were like [whining voice], "Oh, we're confused by life," and the Nirvana/Pearl Jam era was upon us. So I'm glad there's at least some kind of subculture of kids who are into pushing the extremes and trying hard. When I first heard Children of Bodom, I really couldn't believe it. I thought my old band Racer X were the heaviest. I heard Children of Bodom and said, "No, they are the heaviest."

SATRIANI What's cool for me in listening to those bands is the rhythmic aspect. The rhythmic thing is a reflection of the new message that the new generation needs to hear. In the Nineties, it was a different message. Society just needed to brood on that jangly sort of unorganized sound. It was the same amount of technique, just a different technique. But now the

new generation of society needs to hear something else. They need to hear Dragonforce. They need to hear these impossible parts played with finesse and accuracy. That's what we're really involved in. It's sort of like a virus that we all catch.

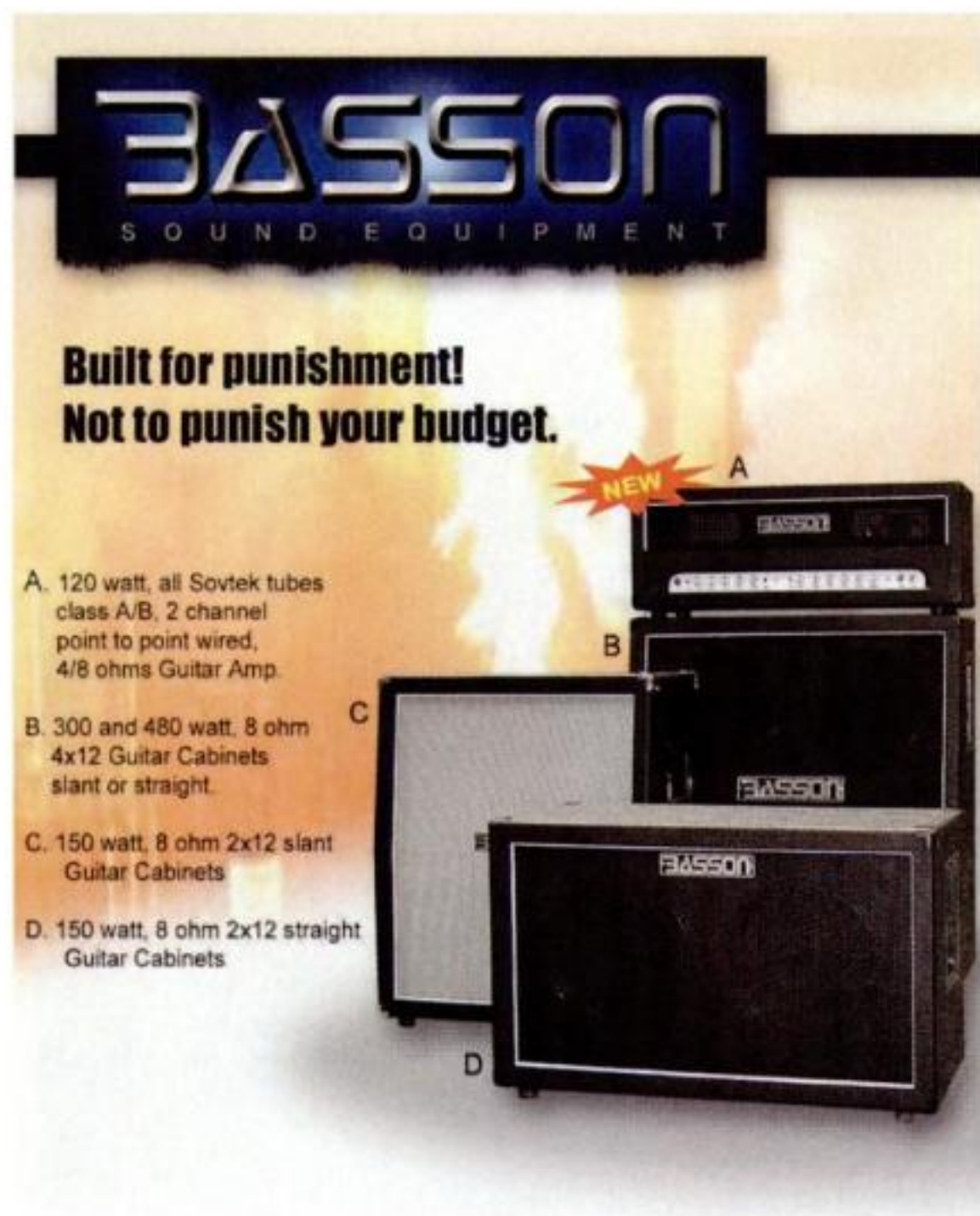
GW It is true that the rhythmic complexity is a big part of the appeal.

SATRIANI That's what separates each era of heavy metal, if you look at it. Just the way the chug is arranged. It's gotta have a chug in there if it's gonna be called metal. But the way that Black Sabbath is different from Metallica, and Metallica is different than Dragonforce, is in that rhythmic aspect. It keeps changing.

PETRUCCI I love the new style. To me it conveys that those guys have really put a lot of time into doing this. If you hear Disturbed, you know that these guys are taking what they do seriously.

GW Is there anything in the world of gear that's turning you guys on?

SATRIANI The gear is so important. That's why so many players eventually get into equipment design. The creation of the song "Super Colossal" was really about two new things. One was a prototype, five-watt, Class A amp that Peavey turned into the Mini Colossal [the third amp in Joe's JSX Series with Peavey], which was released at the NAMM show just recently. The other was a pedal called the POG, sent to me by my friend Teddy Rash, who owns music-toys.com. It's a funky Electro-Harmonix unit: a Polyphonic Octave Generator. I don't know what it's trying to do, technically, but what I got it to do was complete my vision of what a song about a giant guitar player would sound like.



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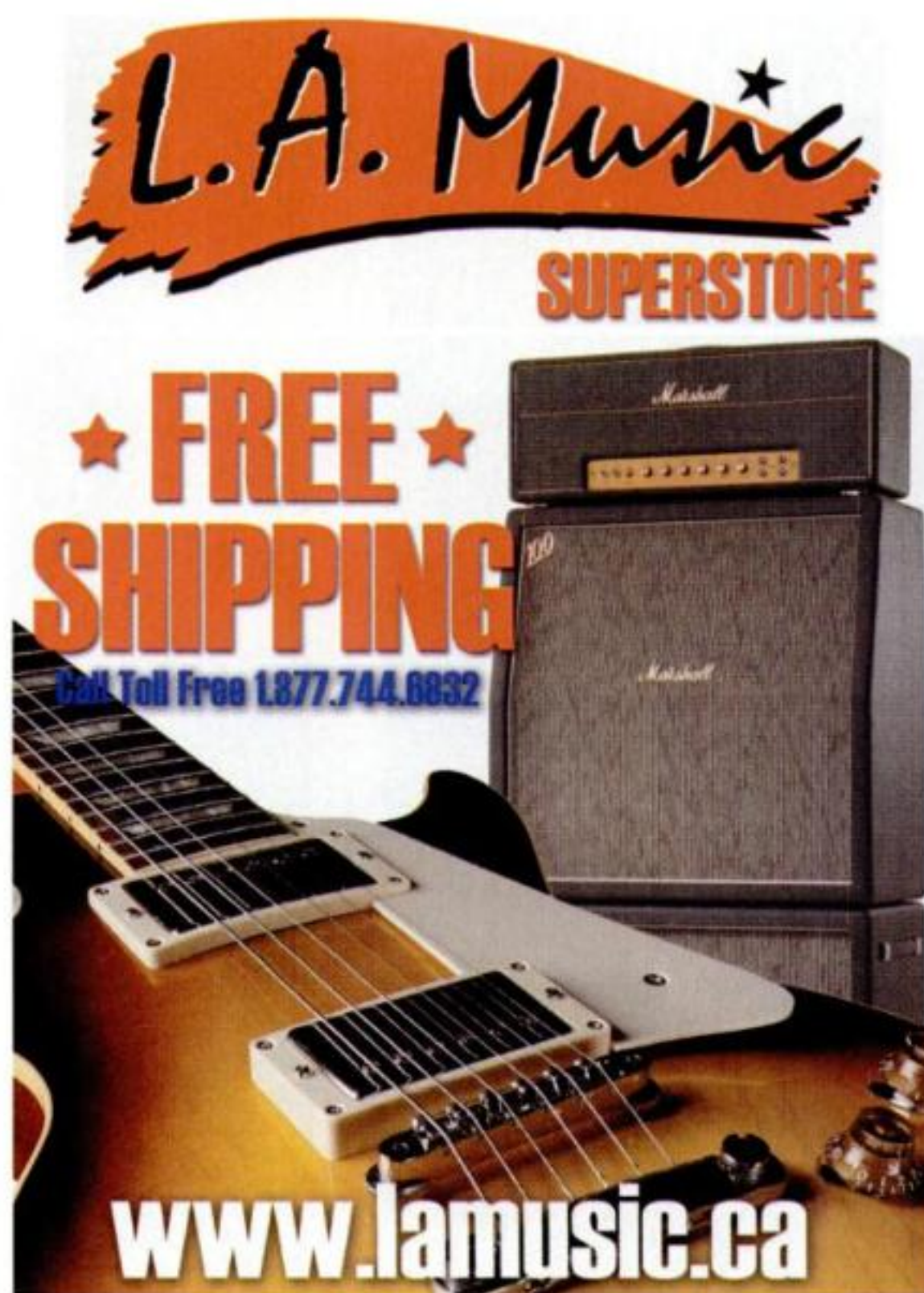
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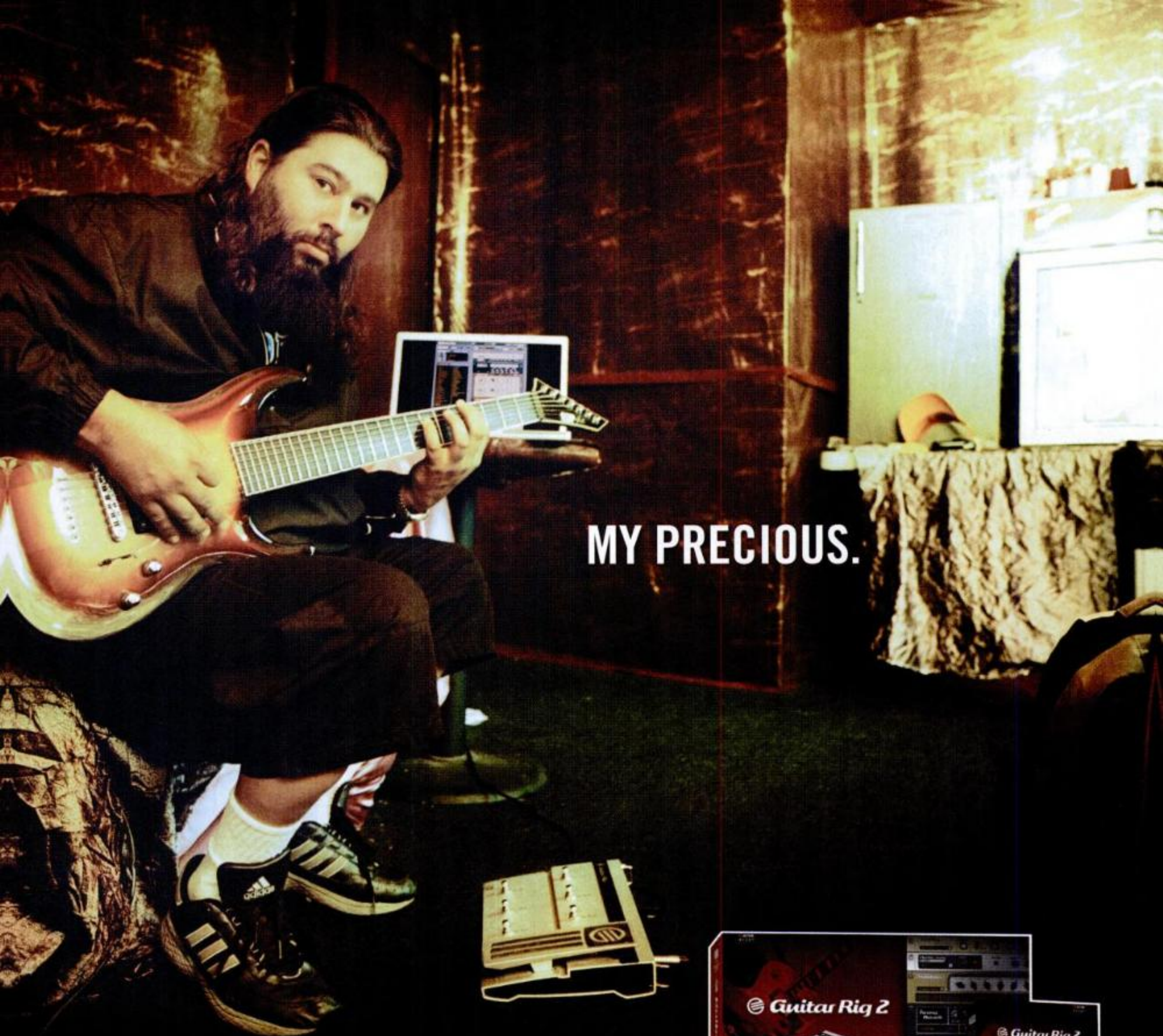


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PETRUCCI There are tons of toys out there, but for me it always comes down to the guitar and the amp. You want a guitar that's most conducive to playing, that doesn't present any limitations and stop you from doing anything you want. In fact, it should help you do the things you want to do. I have a new Ernie Ball Music Man signature model; my new incarnation: it's called the F-1. We made some changes to make it much more friendly to play. There's more access at the neck joint, and I had them widen the body of the guitar, 'cause it was feeling like the guitar was a little too small.

GILBERT For the longest time I was never picky about guitars. But when you have a guitar company making you stuff, you can't help but focus on small details. So I recently bought a bunch of tools and learned how to measure

necks. I took all my favorite guitars and tried to measure the radius of the necks and the scale length. I wanted to figure out, Why do I like these particular guitars? What's the magic thing? And I found that my best-sounding guitars were ones that had a bigger neck joint, so I incorporated that into the newest signature model guitar that Ibanez made for me.

PETRUCCI It's cool that you don't use a whammy bar, because it sounds better.

GILBERT Well, a decent one doesn't sound bad. But the trouble I had with the bar is, because I'm always muting on the bridge, I'd hurt my little pinkie!

PETRUCCI You have to try my guitar. We've developed our own custom bridge at Music Man and it takes into account all those things you're talking about. All the saddles are round-

ed. There are no sharp edges on it.

GILBERT I think it had something to do with the Allen screws in my case.

PETRUCCI They're all recessed on mine. And there's a little stainless-steel cover that's rounded as well, so that when you rest your hand on the bridge there's no surface that's sharp. But I love the frets on your guitar!

GILBERT They're tall, skinny ones. I've asked Ibanez to put high skinny frets on my last two guitars, but it didn't feel quite right. It turns out they were the right frets. They were just filing them down too much when they set up the guitar. I think we've got it right now. High frets give you almost the feel of a scalloped fretboard. I've also had them move my bridge pickup a hair closer to the neck to warm up the sound a little. And the f-holes are a hair smaller on my newest guitar. More understated. *[The f-holes on Gilbert's guitars are painted on and, therefore, strictly cosmetic.]*

PETRUCCI Some guys play any guitar and they don't care. They have a collection of vintage guitars and they pull one out. But I need a guitar that fits me like a glove. And the amp is just as important. I use Mesa/Boogies. The latest one I'm playing is the Mark IV, which I played on the new Dream Theater record and I use live. The amp is a huge part of how you're perceived, how you come across. The amp has its own personality—how it interacts with the pickups. You have to learn that. I look on it as a wild horse that it's your job to tame. So I've learned to ride this amp, and that's part of my sound, part of the intensity I'm presenting.

GILBERT I see the start of an ad campaign there! *[laughs]* But you also have to consider the venue. That's like a piece of equipment itself, and one not of your choosing. I've played gigs in the middle of the woods. I do guitar clinics in Borneo, South America and China. I've played in everything from Japanese guitar schools, where everything is carpeted and it's the driest sound in the world, to Chinese discos, where the P.A. is facing you instead of the audience. Surviving all that has taught me the licks that always work. I've got the licks for the echoey venue. I've got the licks for the dry venue. And I've got the gear as well. As a rock guitar player, the most important part of your gear is how you get the distortion. The distortion enables some of those licks to happen. So I've got distortion on the amp and two different distortion units on my pedal board.

GW Will you actually change what pedals you use based on the venue?

GILBERT I just always make sure I have a lot of extra distortion pedals ready to go. Because a lot of times I do tours where I don't know what amp is going to show up. I remember showing up at one place and a Roland Jazz Chorus was my amp. That's a great amp for clean sounds, but not for what I do. So here I was doing a gig in a mall in Japan where a bunch of people would rather be shopping for clothes, and I'm plugged into a Roland Jazz Chorus amp. And I'm wearing a blue, furry suit with a tail. I'm up there thinking, How can I make this work?

PETRUCCI That's like a nightmare!

GW One of those classic performance anxiety dreams.

GILBERT But at the end of the gig, with enough fuzz pedals plugged in, it worked. I think it was the sheer terror. The terror inspired me. Not that I'd want it to happen again.

GW What about computer amp simulation?

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Is it there yet?

SATRIANI Hell no! I think the science might be there. But what we're talking about is the [analog-to-digital and digital-to-analog] converters. In the studio, we record with expensive converters, whether we're using them with Pro Tools, Radar or whatever. And we all like it. Or at least we've all agreed, Well, this is close enough to [analog] tape that the world has moved over to it. The same technology is in all those modeling amps and pedals. The problem is that the converters are no longer the \$10,000 ones; they're maybe 75 cents apiece. So everything has to be shrunk down to a 1 or 2dB dynamic level just to get into the processor. Well, that's not what guitar playing is about. It's not a 1 to 2dB dimension. That's why those things sound like crap.

PETRUCCI This comes up all the time in the

studio. You're looking for an EQ for a vocal, a drum or something, and all the Massenburgs [high-end equalization units] are taken up. And someone will say, "Let's just use the plug-in version. It's really good." But how did they make the plug-in? They're trying to imitate every move that the real piece of gear does. Call me crazy, but I don't know how they could ever 100 percent simulate what a real amp or a real EQ can do.

GILBERT But I have to say, the new Pro Tools stuff is so much better than I expected. I still, by far, prefer the amp, but whenever I plug into the computer simulation, it's like, Well, I'm not gonna use it on the album, but it's a lot better than I thought it would be. So I have to give them a little credit.

SATRIANI I think any piece of gear can do the trick. And you never know what it's going to be.

You look back at a song like [the Sixties garage rock classic] "Louie Louie." Everything's wrong with the recording, but there's nothing wrong with it. It's a hit. It works because it's stimulating excitement in society.

GILBERT I have a question for you guys. Something I've been thinking about. I was looking at a review of the first show we did, in Phoenix.

SATRIANI That was your first mistake!

GILBERT And the review said something like, "Paul Gilbert was jaw-droppingly fast but had no recognizable style." I've had this happen before. I remember doing an interview in Germany and the guy says [fake German accent], "Vy is it, Paul, that Steve Wai, Yngwie Malmsteen, Wiwian Campbell and Winny Wincent all have style, but you have no style?" So I ask you: What is style? Why don't I have any? Do I need some? And, damn it, where do I go to get some, so I can get these journalists off my back?

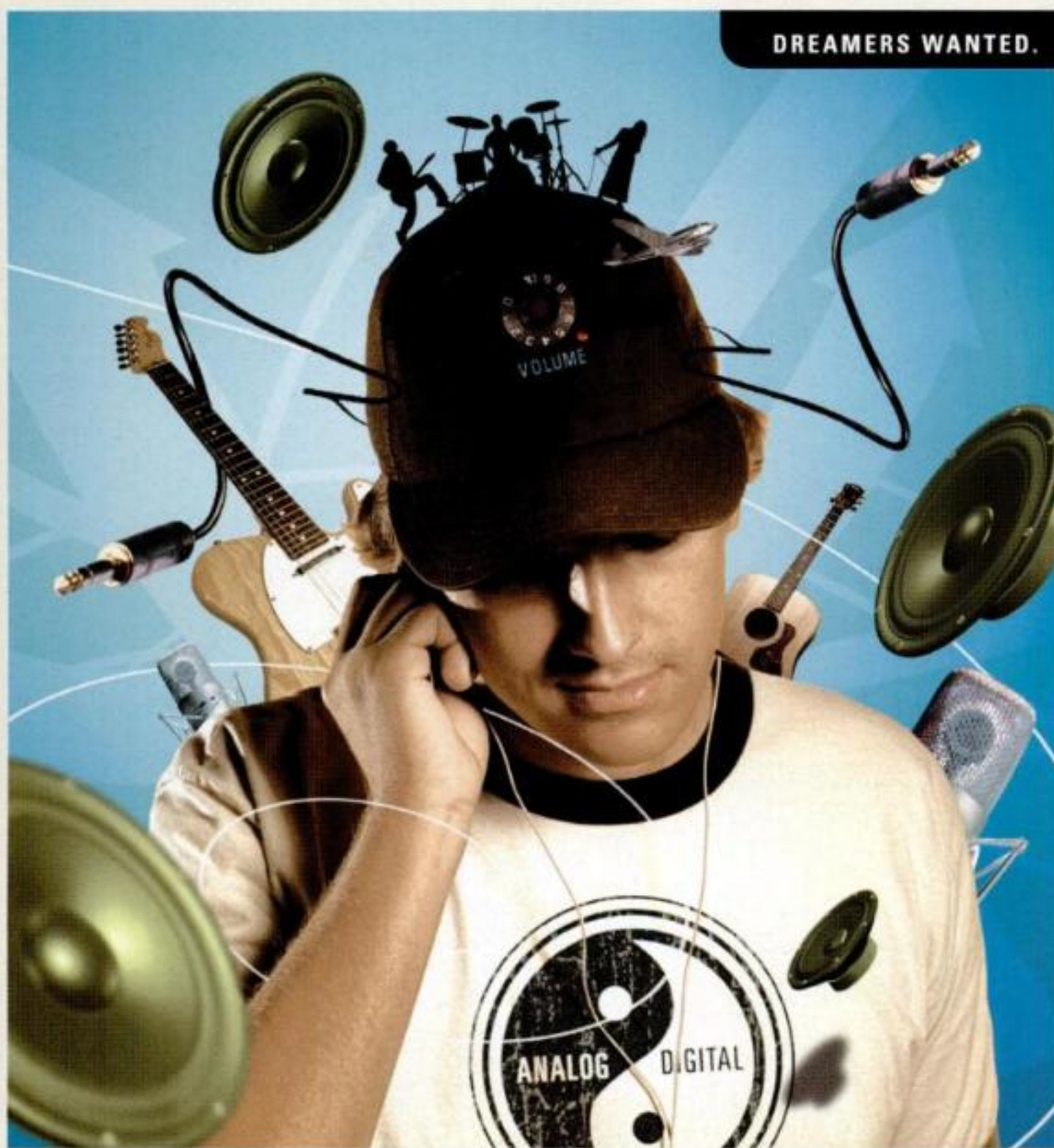
PETRUCCI First of all, you have to be of Italian descent.

GW And you gotta be from Long Island.

SATRIANI When someone comes up with a comment like that, I always think it shows their ignorance. Obviously, they're underexposed to what it is we are doing and the people who are in our genre. Or they're just completely misinformed about the art of guitar playing. They just think, Well, he doesn't sound like Mark Knopfler. He doesn't sound like Neil Young. He doesn't sound like anybody!

PETRUCCI I think it's impossible not to have a style. If you're a human being and you're playing an instrument, especially guitar, it's so

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GILBERT Well, a classical musician, for example, might not want to have a style. If you're in a string section with 70 other guys, all playing in unison, you want to band together in that glorious unison sound. And part of me does want that. My parents had classical music going all the time, and I really admired the virtuosity of those musicians: how pure the notes were and how, if they did vibrato, it was always the same. It was a method. It was very robotic in its perfection.

PETRUCCI Very disciplined.

GILBERT Exactly. And when I first heard Jimi Hendrix, the least appealing part for me was the mess. Which I love now. But it took a while for me to love that. So it's always been this inner battle for me. I always think, If I add some

mess, I want it to be purposeful, like the little sprig of something on top of a cheesecake. But it always knocks me for a loop when someone says I have no style. I never even thought about it. I never sat down and said, "Okay, I played these notes, now I'm going to add the style in."

PETRUCCI I'll tell you right now, hands down, that's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard. Of course you have a style.

GW I was talking to a local bass player where I live, and he was telling me, "Oh, I'm taking jazz lessons and I'm correcting all the errors in my playing." I thought about it and said, "You know, the sum total of my 'errors' is what constitutes my style." Why would anyone want to get rid of that? I think it's like that for everyone. Style is those human imperfections and idiosyncrasies. Style is the unique way

that each one of us gets hold of the instrument, physically and conceptually.

SATRIANI What errors was he talking about?

GW You know jazz teachers: they tell you not to put your thumb over the fretboard. That kind of shit. "Oh, that's not the proper finger for that note."

SATRIANI I had a music teacher who would point out when guitar players had a vibrato that was really like a nervous twitch, rather than an emotional decision to enhance the performance. He loved Johnny Winter, for instance, because he thought that the connection between the vibrato and the soul of the performance was perfect. It was completely natural. But when he would hear other players, he would just stiffen up and bark.

So style is a funny thing. Some people think it's an accumulation of affectations. But that's just on the surface. Like when some people try to play the blues, they do funny things with the third, or they think that adopting a certain kind of vibrato is what the blues is about. And of course it's not. That's when my teacher would say, "There's a person who doesn't have style, but they have affectation." They've just accumulated this mess of stuff, but they can't get a handle on who they are. What story are they telling?

And I think that there's an important message there: in order to reach people, a player has to make the effort to want to say something and to say something real. You notice it when someone's not telling the truth. They can be good or bad technically. It doesn't seem to matter. What matters is the honesty and integrity of the message. 🌟

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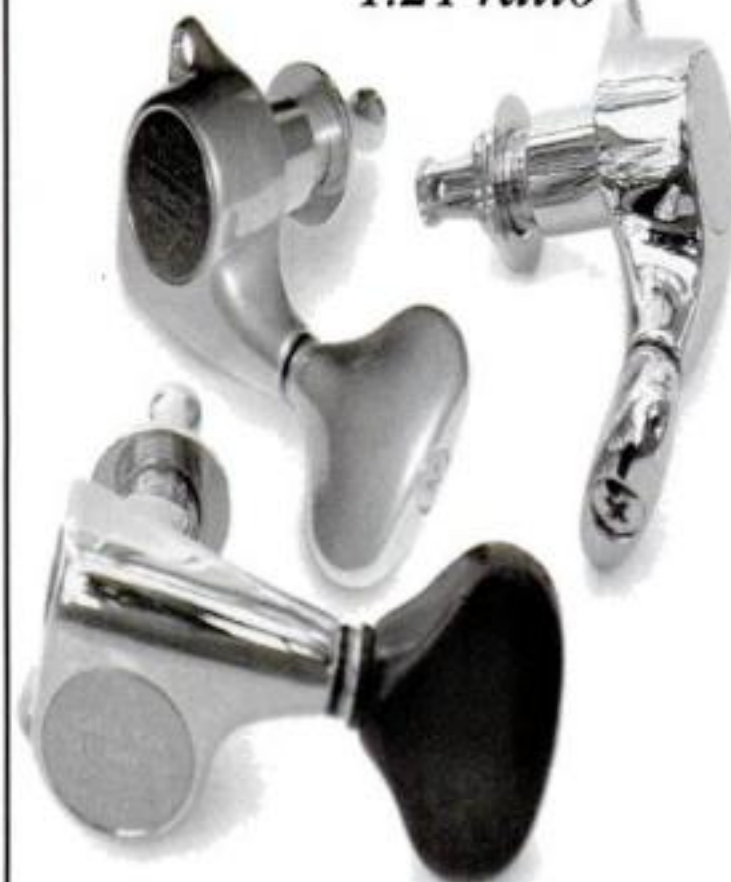
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GW You, and maybe Izzy, excluded.

SLASH You know, I don't recall sitting around with the guys and strategizing the look and all that shit. It all just came from a pure, guttural place. I will say that, in the early days, there was definitely a heavy New York Dolls and Hanoi Rocks vibe to what Guns were doing. And I guess in some way all the glam bands at that time sort of came from that world, but I just think we approached it with a little more depth. A lot of the others just skimmed off the top without really getting into the nuts and bolts of the sound. The one exception was Mötley Crüe—Nikki [Sixx]'s roots were similar to ours, and he knew exactly where he wanted to go with his band, how he wanted it to look and how

he wanted it to sound. But most of the other guys in the scene just didn't do their homework.

GW Prior to Guns N' Roses, you auditioned to be the guitarist in Poison, perhaps the prototypical L.A. glam band.

SLASH And I almost got the gig. What happened was, Matt [Smith], their original guitar player, quit the band and moved back home to Pennsylvania. I had just been sort of scrounging around L.A., looking for anything that was happening, just to get out there and play. So one day Matt called me up and said "Poison's going to be auditioning guitarists. You should go out for it." And I thought...well, I really didn't like Poison! I didn't like that whole thing. But there was something exciting about them, and the thought of being able to get out there and start working the scene was enticing to me.

I was willing to do whatever I could to break into it. So I learned a few of their songs and went down to the rehearsal space they were all living in at the time to audition.

GW So how did it go?

SLASH I played the shit out of those songs! And I got called back, twice. Then I was asked to come in a third time, which is when it got serious. And I remember as I was walking in that last time, C.C. [DeVille] was coming back the other way. We passed each other in the hall. So it came down to C.C. and me.

GW And he got the gig.

SLASH He clearly fit the part better than I did. I mean, he came in with his hair all done up, he had all the right clothes and was wearing stiletto heels. I showed up looking the way I look now. And I also remember I had on a pair of moccasins, because the Poison guys looked at me and asked, "What do you wear?" I was like, "This is...it," you know? And they said, "Well, do you have some different shoes?" So I knew that was it. When I got the phone call that C.C. got the job, I wasn't surprised. He was perfect for them.

GW How did you hook up with Axl?

SLASH After the Poison thing, I joined this band called Black Sheep. Before me they had been playing with Paul Gilbert, which is pretty funny given how different we are as guitarists. And it was at a Black Sheep gig that I started talking to Axl. He told me he had had a falling out with [then Guns N' Roses guitarist] Tracii Guns and asked if I wanted to join the band. Izzy, of course, was already there, and so was Duff. Then we needed a guy to fill in for our drummer at the time, Rob Gardner, so I called up Steven [with whom Slash had played in the band Road Crew, and which also included, briefly, McKagan]. And it just happened, you know? The five of us got together, and from that point on, Guns were the scourges of Hollywood. And we *hated* Poison!

GW Was Guns N' Roses the first two-guitar band you were a part of?

SLASH Yeah. I was used to being the only guitar player, but Izzy came with Axl, and that's just the way it was. And ever since then, I've preferred having that other guy.

GW As a lead guitarist, were you conscious of having to stand toe to toe with all the flashy players that dominated the scene at the time?

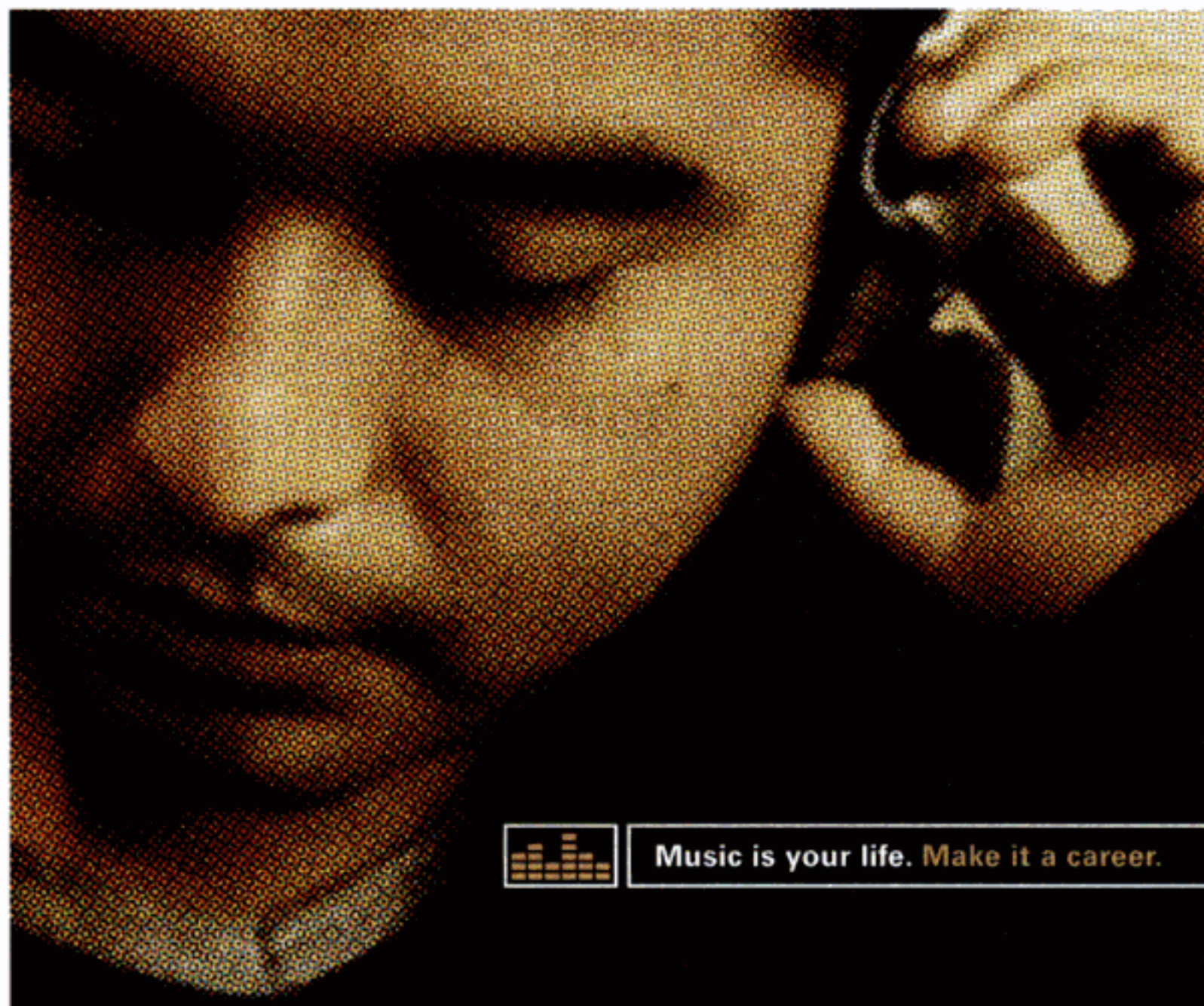
SLASH Not at all. Guns just weren't that kind of band, and I was never that kind of player. I was into guitarists like Gary Moore, Michael Schenker and John Sykes—guys who were fast but also very tasty. And while the energy of our music called for some fast playing, I never did it to keep up with all the Eddie Van Halen clones or anything. I had no interest in that.

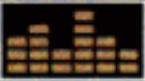
GW What did you think of Izzy's guitar style?

SLASH I loved the way Izzy played. When I first met him, he was a Les Paul-and-Marshall guy, just real dirty and kinda punkish. He had a great sound. Around the time we began playing together, he kinda lightened up his attack, and started going through these different phases. But he always had a great sense of rhythm. He didn't play with any kind of real defiant prowess, but he always hit the song perfectly. And he's a great songwriter.

GW How did the two of you work together?

SLASH We never sat and really worked shit out, you know? It just sort of was what it was. Like, he would never play a riff the way I showed




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it to him. He would play off of it, somehow, and then I would just play how I play. It made for a really cool two-guitar combo, because somehow our parts always locked together.

GW Were you each aware of what the other was doing in a given song?

SLASH No, not at all. Though if there were set licks, like in, say, "Welcome to the Jungle," I would have a pretty good idea of what he was going to do. But if you asked me to play Izzy's parts for all the songs on *Appetite*, there's no way I could do it. I just don't know a lot of them.

GW You recorded much of the basic tracks for *Appetite* live, with the band playing together at the same time. I understand that many of Izzy's performances made it to the final mix, while you went back and recut your parts at a later date.

SLASH That's because Izzy would never come back to the studio! Our producer, Mike Clink, would try to get him to come down to fix something up, but I think he only managed to get him there once or twice. So we just kept all of Izzy's scratch tracks.

GW Why did you redo your rhythm guitar parts?

SLASH I couldn't get a good sound in the studio, because I didn't have a set guitar or amp at the time; I had hocked a lot of gear before we went in due to some drug problems. So I was left with three different guitars: a B.C. Rich Warlock, a Jackson prototype and a Jackson Firebird. And they were fine onstage, when everything was cranked to 10, but in the studio they sounded awful. I was fucking freaking out! I knew I couldn't record the album with any of those guitars. So when we cut the basic tracks I was drinking a bottle of Jack Daniel's, easy, during the process, and just playing along to help with the live vibe. Luckily, right after that I got some new gear. It was like it was in the cards or something. I came upon the right Les Paul and the right Marshall.

GW People tend to think that the Les Paul-and-Marshall combo was your setup from day one, as if you came out of the womb that way.

SLASH Yeah, right. [laughs] That has always been my favorite setup, but it wasn't until we did *Appetite* that things truly solidified for me. It took me a while to find my identity. During Guns' club days I had a Les Paul that had belonged to Steve Hunter [Alice Cooper, David Lee Roth], but I also used a B.C. Rich Mockingbird, a Strat, some Jacksons. Then when we were recording *Appetite*, our manager [Alan Niven] found me another Les Paul—it was a handmade copy [the Chris Derrig-built 1959 replica], but it sounded great, and that was it. No more fucking around. And I use that guitar to this day.

GW What was your main recording amplifier for *Appetite*?

SLASH A Marshall head that we rented from S.I.R. studios in L.A. I think it was a JCM800, though I really don't remember. I actually tried to keep it after we were done with the album. I said, "Just tell S.I.R. it was stolen." But then we had a rehearsal over there, and my fucking roadie brought the amp down. The guys at S.I.R. took it right back, and I never saw it again. But there are people who have gone to great lengths to find out everything about that Marshall. There's one guy who tried to put together an identical head. I actually tried it out while we were recording the new Velvet Revolver album. It was good, but it didn't sound like that S.I.R. Marshall.

GW How instrumental was Mike Clink to the sound you achieved on the album?

SLASH As far as my personal guitar tone, I would say that it's one of the best I ever had in a recording studio. A lot of that was the gear and the room, but Clink was also a great engineer. He was able to keep everything real tight, with a lot of punch and midrange. Another thing was that he got a really good drum sound, especially for those days, when drum sounds were fairly over the top. Overall, the album has a little bit of an Eighties sound to it, but it's still better than most of the stuff from that time. I'd also have to give a lot of credit to Steve Thompson and Michael Barbiero, who did a lot of EQing during the mixing stage.

GW Let's talk about some of the songs on *Appetite for Destruction*. You've said in the past that "Sweet Child O' Mine," which is probably the biggest song from that record, began as something of a joke.

SLASH Yeah. There was a point after we signed with Geffen when the band was living together in this house that a management company had leased for us. And we were sitting around one day when I came up with that little guitar figure that's at the top of the song, just messing around. I didn't think it was anything particularly good, but Duff and Izzy were there, and they started to play some chords behind it, and Axl, who was upstairs at the time, heard what we were doing and wrote down some words. I never thought that little intro thing would turn into anything.

GW Along with the opening to "Sweet Child," your unaccompanied intro to "Welcome to the Jungle"—that descending line with the heavy delay on it—is one of your most well-known licks. And given that the song was the leadoff track and single from *Appetite*, it was also the first sound many people heard from Guns N' Roses. How did that come together?

SLASH I wrote that part specifically with the effect in mind. I had one of those old, funky, grey plastic Boss pedal boards, and one of the settings on it was a delay. I turned it on and just started messing around. The line is pretty simple, but it sounded very cool with the echoed notes. What's funny is that there are those few extra notes at the very beginning—that *diggita diggita*—before the pattern kicks in. That's because whenever we would do the song I'd hit the first note a few times to make sure I was in time with the delay. And it just stuck as part of the intro.

GW Do you have a favorite song from *Appetite*?

SLASH "Paradise City" is still my favorite. We wrote that as a band, all five of us together in a van, on our way back to L.A. from a gig in San Francisco. There's a lot of spirit and energy there. It just encapsulates a lot about that time period for me.

GW Any tracks you're not too fond of?

SLASH I always had a hard time with "Think About You." It was one of the songs that Izzy wrote that was very indicative of the sort of Hanoi Rocks thing that was going on at the time. I never really got off on playing it all that much. And after that would be "Anything Goes," which is probably the oldest song on the record. By the time we recorded it for *Appetite*, that song had been played by so many different configurations of the band and gone through so many revisions. It came out cool in the end, I guess, but it's a little

choppy as far as the arrangement is concerned.

GW There are some great Guns tunes from that period that didn't make it onto *Appetite*. Why didn't you record, say, "Shadow of Your Love" instead of one of those?

SLASH Actually, when we were first considering whether or not to work with Mike Clink, we went in and demoed a few songs with him to see if it would work. And "Shadow of Your Love" was one of the ones we cut. I can't really say for sure why it didn't make the record in the end. It was just a real simple, good rocking song, but I guess it wasn't as "seasoned" as a lot of the other material. And probably Axl didn't quite see the potential in it.

GW "November Rain" was around at that time as well.

SLASH The thing with "November Rain" was that, back then, it was, like, this 20-minute epic that just went on forever. We were never able to edit it down until we did it for the *Use Your Illusion* albums.

GW That song always seemed to be particularly close to Axl's heart. I'm surprised he allowed it to be put on the backburner.

SLASH Tom Zutaut [Guns N' Roses' A&R representative at Geffen at the time] was the one who said, "Let's save that for another record." And I think Axl was a little miffed about that. But it was fine with me. I was already fucking petrified about doing one ballad!

GW "Sweet Child O' Mine" was enough for you?

SLASH Yeah, and I wasn't even crazy about that one. But Axl was bitter about the "November Rain" thing for a while, until we did it for *Use Your Illusion*. And, actually, there are a few songs on the *Illusion* records that date back to the *Appetite* period. We wrote "Perfect Crime" while we were in preproduction for *Appetite*, and "You Could Be Mine" came together right before we went in to record the album.

GW Back in the *Use Your Illusion* days, you gave an interview in which you said something to the effect that if the band were to fall apart you would never be able to shake the fact that you're the "ex-Guns N' Roses guitar player."

SLASH I said that? That's funny. I guess it was like a premonition or something. But, you know, it actually doesn't bother me all that much when people want to talk about it. It gets a little irritating when that's all they want to talk about, but I think it would get to me more if I didn't have anything else going on—like if I was working at Wal-Mart now or something. But I've managed to keep myself going. [laughs]

GW From that vantage point, what resonates with you most about that time spent making *Appetite*?

SLASH Just that it was all such a new experience. It was like we were doing everything for the first time. I didn't even know what that record was supposed to be, but when it was done, I knew that it was complete—and also not nearly as messy as it could have been. The songs sounded on the album the way we played them, and it was a pretty honest representation of who we were and what we were about. There was one time toward the end of the sessions when I took home a rough mix of "Welcome to the Jungle" to listen to with my girlfriend. I put it on, and I remember that I was really proud of what we had done. I still am. ☼

G3

JOE SATRIANI ✨ JOHN PETRUCCI ✨ PAUL GILBERT

(Regular columns will return next month.)

HIGHER SHREDUCATION

Strap on your ax and get ready for a little private instruction time with G3 masters Joe Satriani, John Petrucci and Paul Gilbert.

Interviews by Andy Aledort



FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS, Joe Satriani, John Petrucci and Paul Gilbert have represented the absolute pinnacle of modern rock guitar. As the participants in this year's annual G3 shredfest, they are torching the globe on a nightly basis with the kind of intense, fret-melting virtuosity that continues to set a very high standard for rock guitar performance.

Yet, for all their celebrity as renowned players, each is also a well-established educator: Satch has had Metallica's Kirk Hammett and Rage Against the Machine's Tom Morello as celebrity students, Petrucci has authored a series of brilliant instructional DVDs, and Gilbert has conducted a great many guitar clinics around the globe.

Prior to their G3 show in Denver, Colorado, the three guitarists took some time to create the following in-depth lessons on the art of mastering rock guitar. Not surprisingly, given their distinctive styles, we found that each takes a unique approach to teaching. In songs such as "Always with Me, Always with You," "Flying in a Blue Dream," "The Extremist" and "Lords of Karma," Satriani has proven himself a master of all the fundamental modes as well as synthetic modes like Enigmatic, Hungarian minor and super Locrian. Here, he brilliantly lays out a lesson that displays his approach to unlocking the great mysteries of the modes.

John Petrucci possesses technical ability far beyond that of mere mortals, and in his lesson, he offers a systematic approach to conquering the fretboard and developing Herculean chops through an evolving series of challenging melodic sequences. And Paul Gilbert, the driving force behind shred-progenitors Racer X as well as the chart-topping late Eighties outfit Mr. Big, displays his ungodly fretboard range in a lesson that focuses on big stretches and intervallic leaps.

ON DISC
Check out this month's CD-ROM for exclusive video from this lesson!

JOE SATRIANI: MODES FOR JOE

I learned the modes while in high school. Bill Westcott, my music teacher, taught me about all of the *diatonic modes* (modes built from the major scale) in his music theory class. He impressed upon me that I might want to develop my own opinion about each mode. So how does one go about doing that? You write them out, you memorize the intervallic relationships—the spaces between the notes—you try to sing them, so that when you hear them coming from another source you can say, "Hey, that's Lydian" or "That's Lydian dominant, that's major and that's Aeolian."

If you're a guitar player, the other important part is memorizing where those things are on your instrument, in all the different keys. After I had memorized where the modes fell on the fretboard, I began to concentrate more on how they blended with one another, which ones sounded good going from

one to another, which didn't and which had common tones.

A good way to start is with pedal-point exercises: get a pedal point going, like the open low E note, and play different modes in the key of E. For example, if you compare E Ionian (the major scale) and E Lydian (**FIGURE 1**), you see that the only difference is the fourth scale degree: in E Ionian it's A, and in E Lydian it's A \sharp . Is there a source there for some interesting music? Is it more dramatic if it goes from major to minor? Those are questions that get answered pretty quickly.

I might start like this, hitting an open low E and improvising around E Lydian (**FIGURE 2a**: E F \sharp G \sharp A \sharp B C \sharp D \sharp), then go to E Dorian (**FIGURE 2b**: E F \sharp G A B C \sharp D) and then moving to E Mixolydian, which is essentially a major scale with a flatted seventh (**FIGURE 2c**: E F \sharp G \sharp A B C D). From there, I might go to E Aeolian dominant, which is a minor scale with a major third (**FIGURE 2d**: E F \sharp G \sharp A B C D), follow that with E Aeolian, also known as natural minor (**FIGURE 2e**: E F \sharp G A B



On a simpler note, when playing "Always with Me, Always with You"

G3

JOE SATRIANI
JOHN PETRUCCI
PAUL GILBERT

(FIGURE 4a), I begin in a major tonality and, after stating the melody, I switch suddenly to minor (FIGURE 4b). This is a way to keep the message of the song moving in the same direction while offering a different viewpoint. It's like what David Bowie does with lyrics: he'll sing a song from one perspective in the verse, and then on the bridge or another verse he'll switch perspectives. It can seem jarring at first, but it adds depth to the song.

If I'm improvising on a bluesy thing, like this (FIGURE 5), using the C minor blues scale (C E \flat F G \flat G B \flat), I can throw in the major third, E (bar 2, beat two), for a different flavor. If I wanted to get more adventurous, I could also do this (FIGURE 6a): here, I'm very quickly running through different scales, using the major third, the flat nine and the flat five, but I end on the major sixth, which sounds more familiar. And then I could wrap up the phrase like this (FIGURE 6b), clearly defining the root.

I was taught in school that the brain remembers eleven notes, and if you want to go "outside" the established tonality but want it to seem like you are still "inside," you have to make sure the 11th note is "in." If you go beyond that, the audience will perceive it as, "That guy is playing out." Again, if your structure is minor pentatonic and you play something like this (FIGURE 7), the tonality really drifts, until you bring it back into focus at the end.

Going outside the established tonality will sound bad if you're playing over a specific, clearly defined harmonic environment, as in "Always With Me, Always With You." But when you're playing pentatonic-based rock, you could almost play *anything*. If you had a progression like this (FIGURE 8a), you could start with this (FIGURE 8b), which accentuates minor and major thirds and flatted fifths, and it goes fine with the rhythm part. Other styles of music are less accepting, harmonically speaking, and are less accepting of adding the *other* notes—the blue notes, the scary notes and so on. Deep Purple's Ritchie Blackmore and keyboardist Jon Lord are great examples of players who throw exotic scales like Phrygian and Phrygian dominant back and forth, as in this example (FIGURE 9), where it becomes more about the expression than the scales involved.

At the right moment, changing the harmonic color like this can liberate the

FIGURE 2h E Mixolydian
N.C.(E7)



FIGURE 2i E Lydian

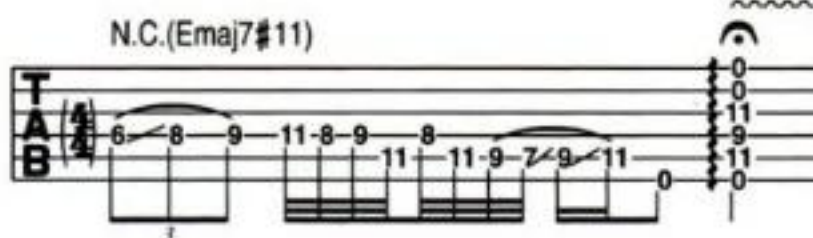


FIGURE 2j E Dorian

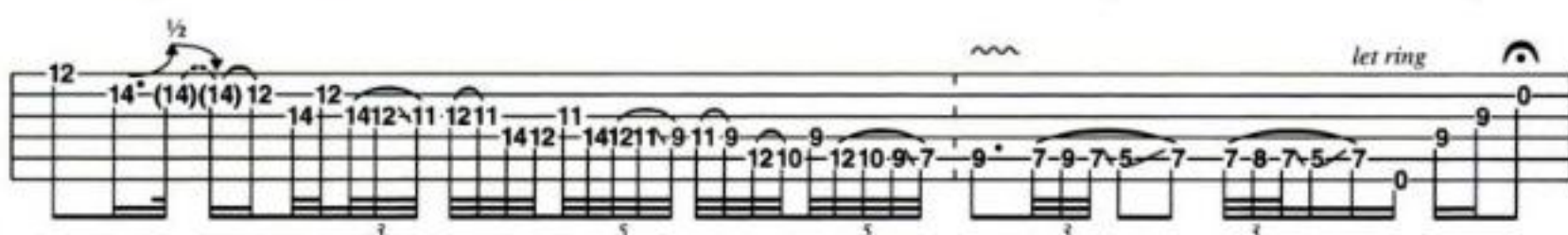


FIGURE 2k E Phrygian dominant
N.C.(E7b9b13)



FIGURE 3a

♩ = 96
E5
(repeat prev. beat)

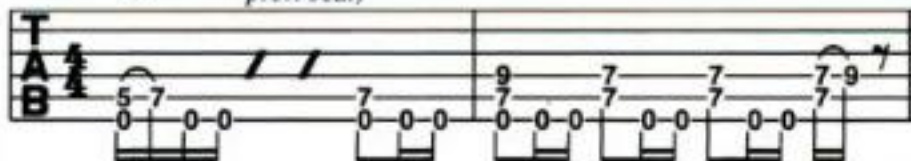


FIGURE 3b

♩ = 96

FIGURE 3c

♩ = 96



FIGURE 3d

FIGURE 4a "Always With Me, Always With You" FIGURE 4b

♩ = 48

Badd4
P.M. throughout

Emaj7/6

F#sus4

Bm(add2)
P.M. throughout

Em(add2)

F#7sus4

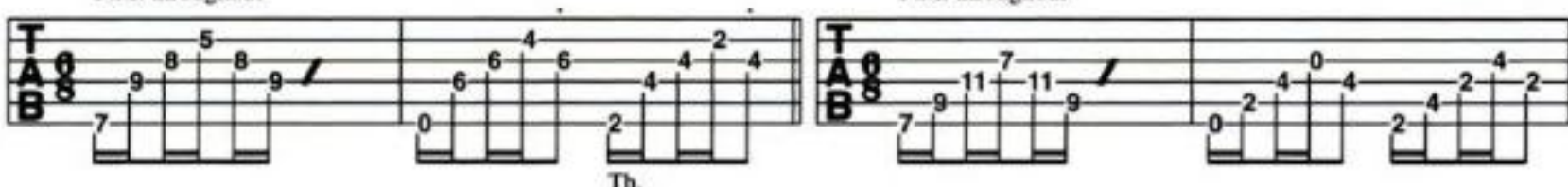
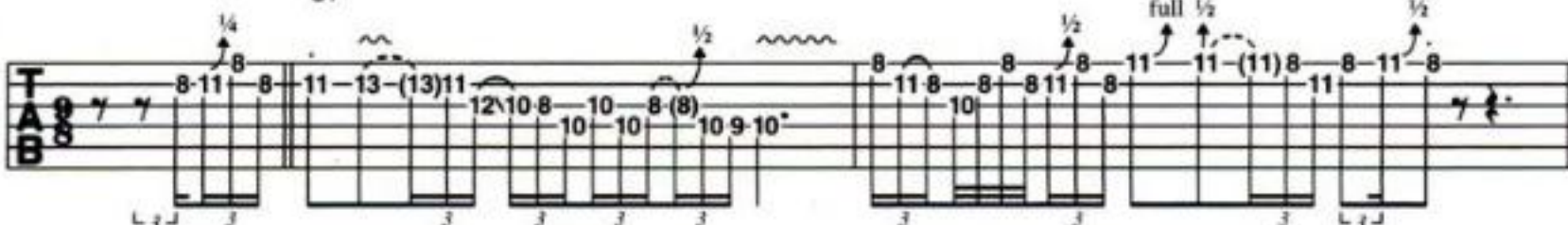


FIGURE 5

♩ = ca. 54

C7



♩ = ca. 54

C7

8 11 8 10 8 8 11 8 11 full 11 (11) 8 9 8 8 11 11 10 8 8 11 10 8 10 8 9 10 8 7

3 3 3 5 5 5

[illegible]

Free time
N.C.(C7)

TAB

♩ = 92

(B5) Bm/D E5

The second system of musical notation for 'The Sound of Silence' by Simon & Garfunkel. It begins with a tempo marking of a quarter note equal to 92 beats per minute. The key signature is one flat (B major/D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The system includes a guitar part on a single staff and a three-part vocal harmony (Tenor, Alto, Bass) on three staves. The guitar part features a melodic line with notes 10, 11, 10, 8, 7, 8, 7, 9, 8, 6, 7, 8, 6, 7, 6, 7, 8, and a final whole note 8. The vocal parts enter with a 'T' (Tenor), 'A' (Alto), and 'B' (Bass) label. The Tenor part has notes 9, 9, X, X, 9, X, X, 9, 9, 9, 9, X, X. The Alto part has notes X, X, X, X, X, X, X, 5, 7, 7, 7, 7, X, X. The Bass part has notes 7, 7, X, X, X, X, X, 5, 7, 7, 7, 7, X, X. Chord symbols (B5), Bm/D, and E5 are indicated above the vocal staves.

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 108$

(E)

The musical score is written for guitar. It begins with a tempo marking of a quarter note equal to approximately 108 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains two measures. The second system contains four measures. The notation includes guitar-specific symbols like (7), (8)*, and (9) for fret numbers, and wavy lines for vibrato. The chords are indicated by numbers 14, 12, 15, 14, 12, 13, 16, 15, 15, 14, 15, 14, 12, 14, 14, 12*, 14, 12, 14. The fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. The score is written in a single staff with a treble clef.

♩ = ca. 60

F#5 Em7

TAB

F#5

That's the kind of thing you'll hear in a G3 jam: we'll arrive at a setting where the harmonic environment is open, and one guy plays a Dorian riff, the next guy plays Phrygian dominant, the next guy plays with his teeth, the other guy just makes a noise, and then the other guy brings out a power drill, and so on. As it goes around, you can see the depth of the musicality of each player by how they play around with this opportunity that presents itself.

I'd like to show you how to take repeated melodic ideas—*sequences*—and expand them by moving across octaves in ways other than staying in one fretboard position. This could be done by ascending diagonally from lower strings in one position to higher strings in higher positions, or descending from lower strings to higher strings in a lower fretboard position. What I like about this approach is that you can cover a lot of range on the fretboard, and it allows

you to explore different areas instead of being locked into one position.

The first sequence is just four notes—B, E, F# and G (**FIGURE 1a**). It could represent part of an E minor scale with some cool notes emphasized, or it could outline an Em(add9) chord; it could also be played against a C chord for a Lydian-#4 type of sound.

Let's move this melodic phrase through three octaves, ascending the neck diagonally (**FIGURE 1b**): in each octave, the phrase falls on pairs of adjacent strings. The guitar is laid out perfectly for this type of approach in that, as the riff progresses, you don't have to change fingerings at all.

There are different ways to incorporate this approach into your playing: you can use it as an "area" for moving into different melodic ideas, as in this example (**FIGURE 1c**), wherein I play "around" the melodic idea in all three octaves. You can also use it as a long run, linking the lower notes to the higher notes by playing the melodic shape through each octave (**FIGURE 1d**). At the end of this phrase, I incorporate the notes of a D major triad, D, F# and A, before finishing the line with an E minor pentatonic (E G A B D) idea. It always sounds good to *imply* different chords when playing over a static pedal tone accompaniment.

Now let's expand the idea by adding one more note, C, to our melodic shape (**FIGURE 2a**); incorporating hammer-ons and finger slides in the sequence makes it more conducive to playing faster licks, like this (**FIGURE 2b**). In order to get the line to flow smoothly, I use an alternate-picking approach, but the hammer-ons and slides take the place of some of the pick attacks, which creates a "skipping" feeling. Whether ascending or descending, the picking pattern is down-down-up.

Additionally, you can create faster licks by staying in one spot and *cycling* a melodic pattern repeatedly, using alternate picking, like this (**FIGURE 3a**). This is fun to do when you want to build a lot of melodic tension. Practice this phrase slowly, making sure each note sounds clearly, and then gradually build up speed while economizing your movements. Then try playing the idea through three octaves (**FIGURE 3b**). When phrased this way (**FIGURES 3b and 3c**), it has a 16th-note triplet feel.

John Petrucci

FIGURE 1a

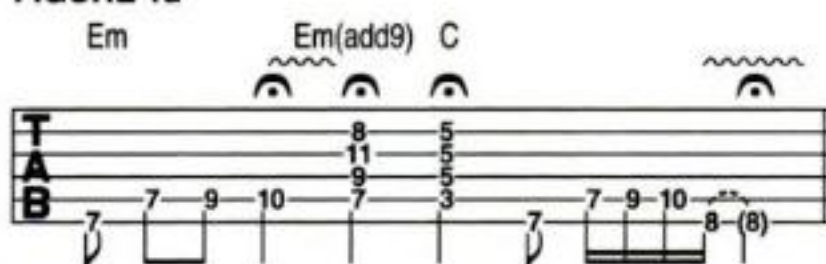


FIGURE 1b

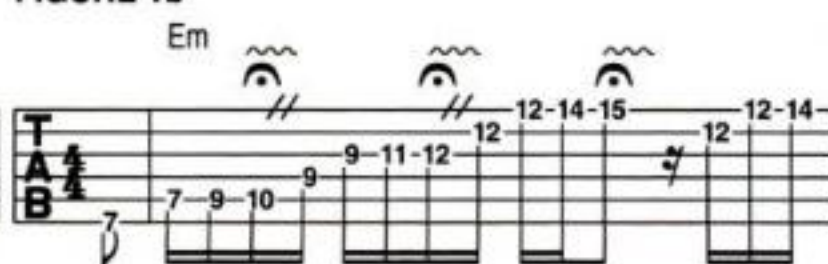


FIGURE 1c

Free time

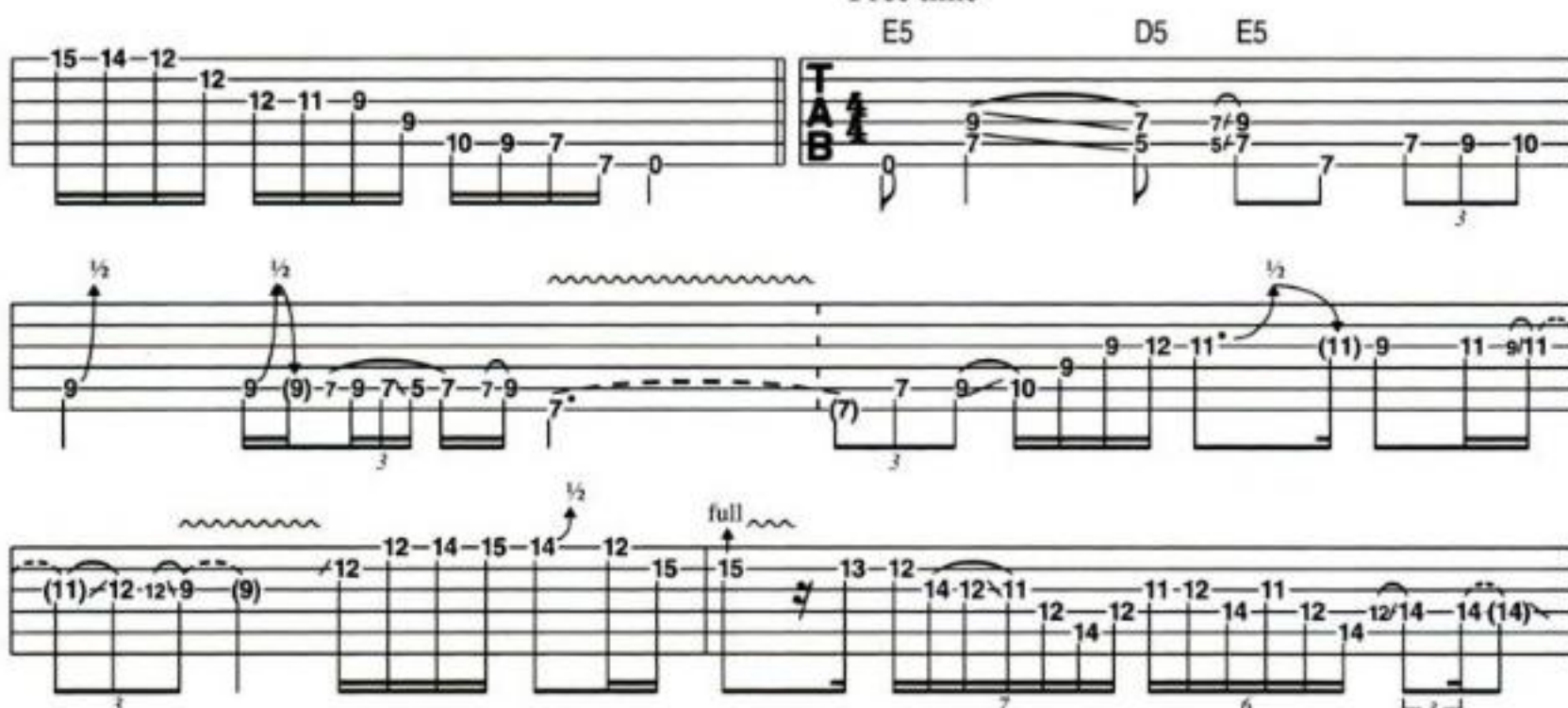


FIGURE 1d

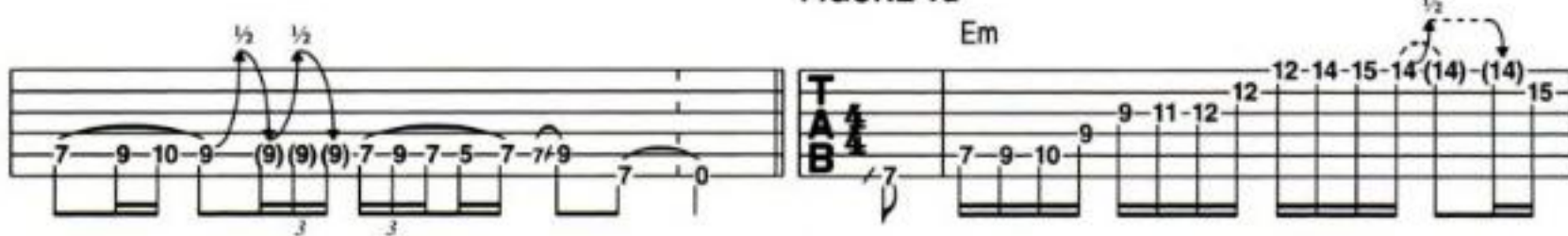


FIGURE 2a

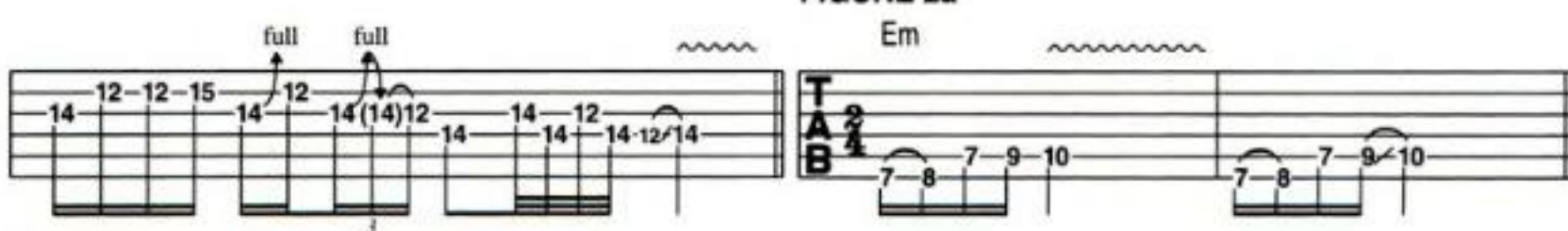


FIGURE 2b

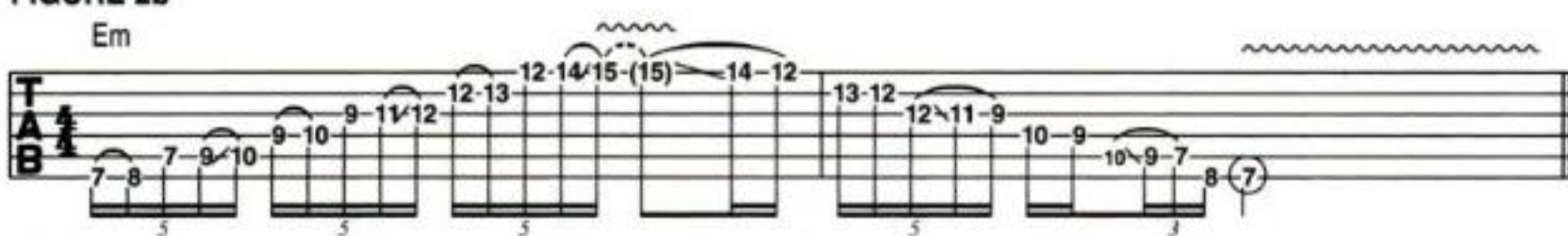


FIGURE 3a

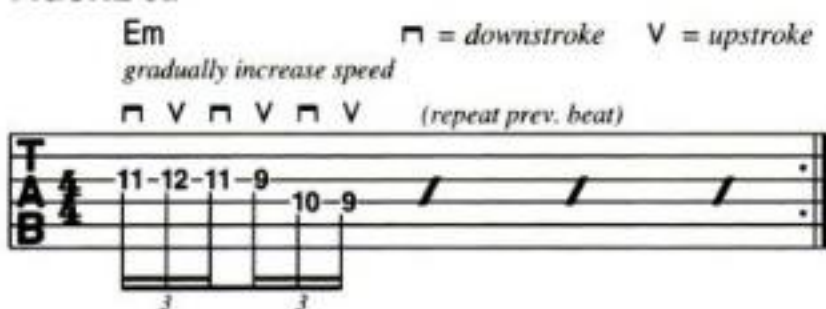
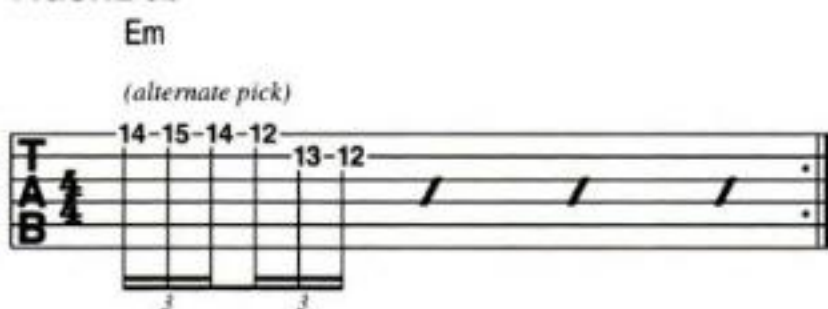


FIGURE 3b



I might practice a run like this by playing the first part by itself, and then methodically move on to each successive shape (**FIGURE 3d**). Next, I might try different combinations (**FIGURE 3e**).

I also like to apply a concept similar to a modal structure; this approach spans a larger range of the fretboard. Here (**FIGURE 4a**), I use a rhythmic scheme of 16th-note triplets applied to fragments of the E Aeolian mode (E F# G A B C D) on adjacent pairs of strings, playing three notes per string. In progressing from one shape to the next, pay



attention to where your pinkie is at the end of the first group of six notes; you will start the next phrase by fretting the preceding note with the index finger. This run spans three octaves and ends at the beginning of a fourth octave.

When playing this run backward (**FIGURE 4b**), the opposite fingering takes place: since each six-note group ends with the index finger, the next phrase begins one note higher in the pattern and is fretted with the pinkie.

To me, the best way to utilize this concept is to play passages that start



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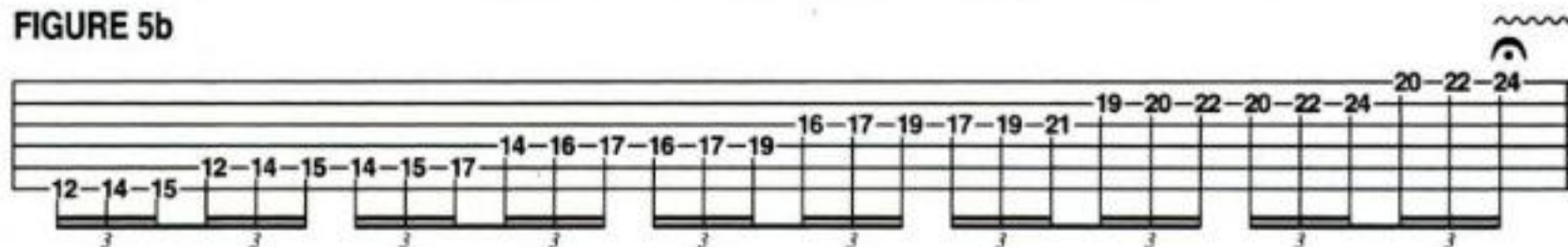
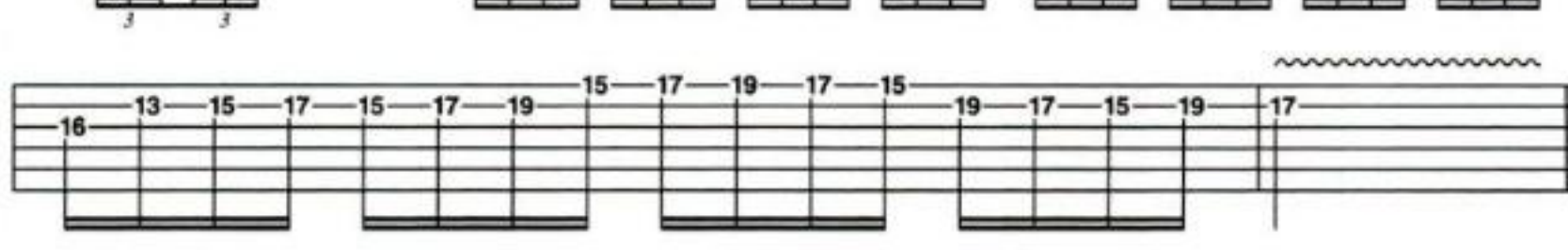
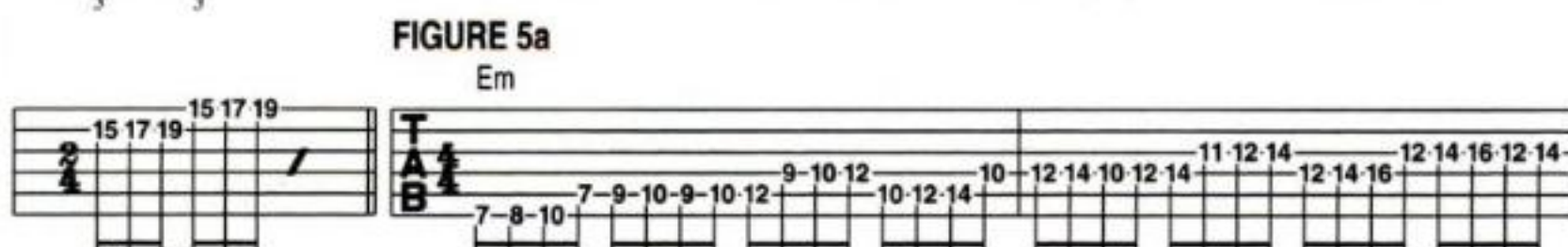
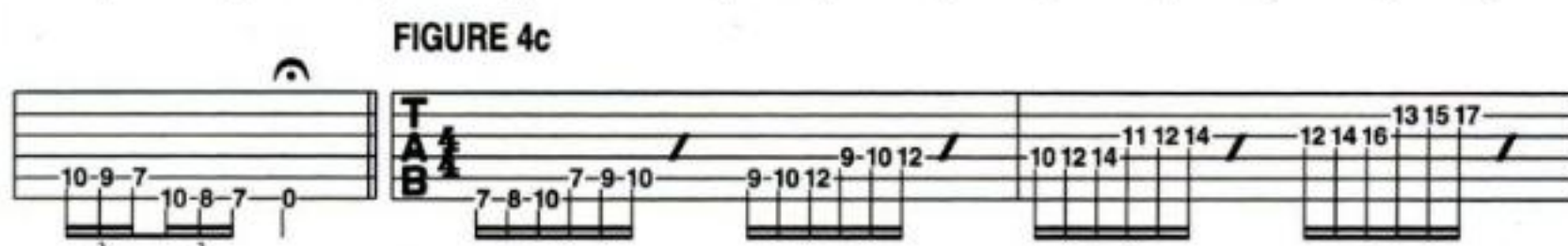
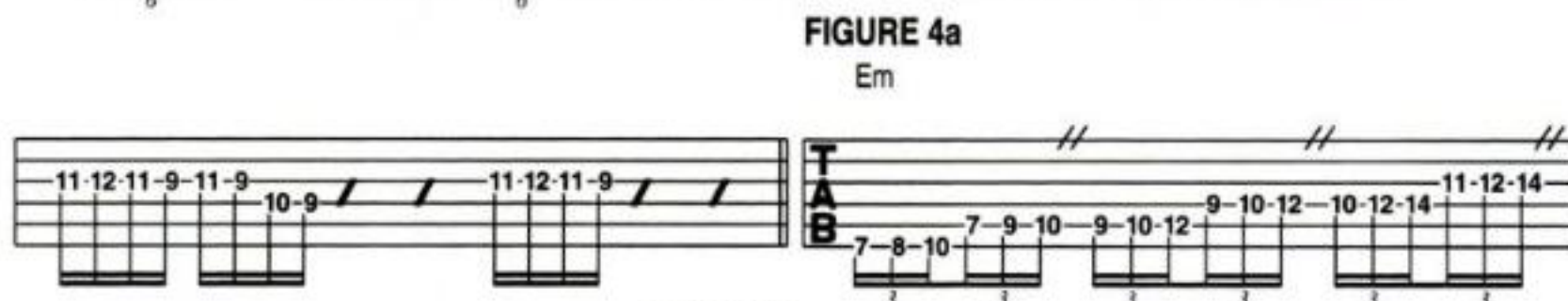
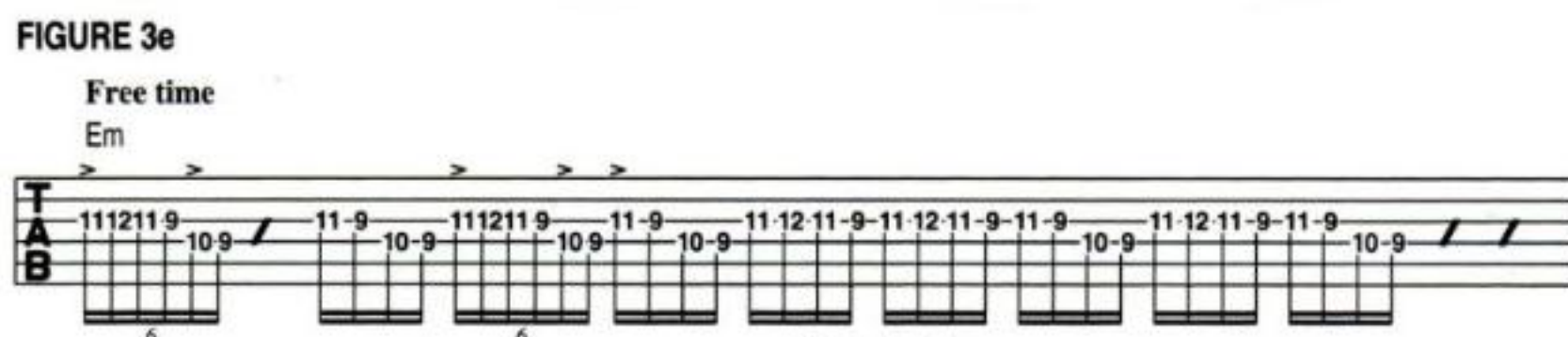
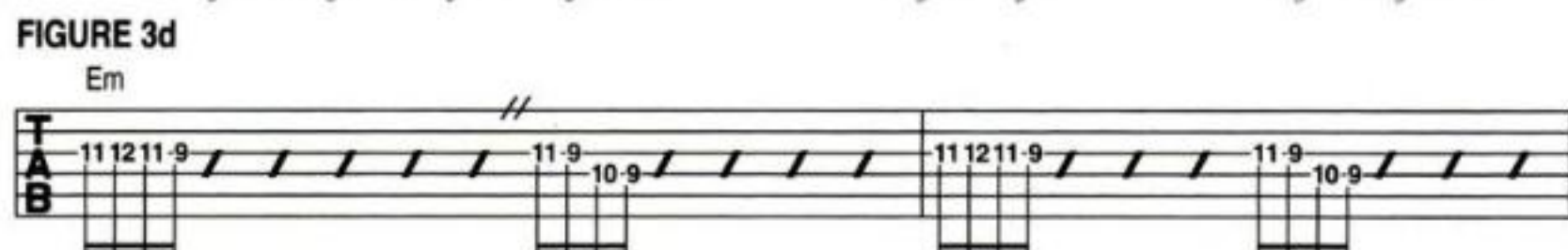
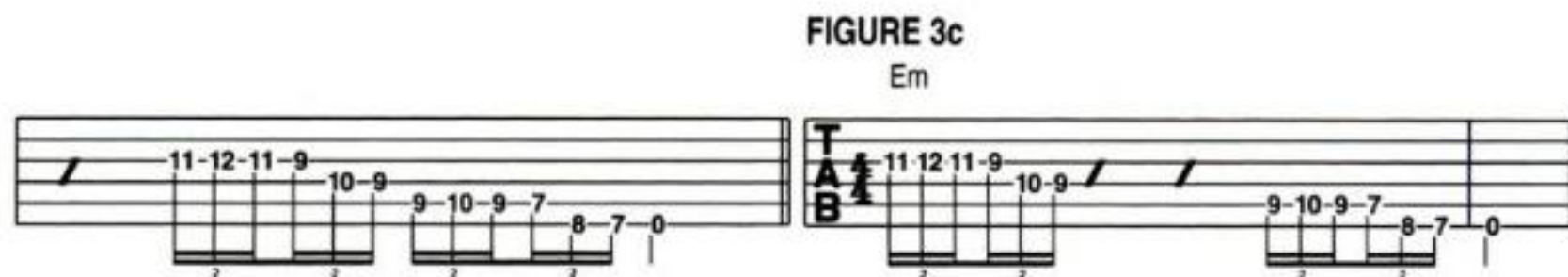
from a low note and ascend, and there are so many different patterns that can emerge. One approach that works well is to play each shape twice in each position, like this (**FIGURE 4c**). Another approach is to phrase each shape in straight 16th notes instead of 16th-note triplets, like this (**FIGURE 5a**), which results in the melodic shape shifting around the bar and starting on either a downbeat or an upbeat, thereby creating an interesting syncopation.

When playing around with this type of idea, you'll discover that some sequences are easier to play than others, depending on where they fall on the fretboard. If we start in 12th position (**FIGURE 5b**), the shapes are a little smaller and easier to handle than if they were played further down the neck; if you play it in second position (**FIGURE 5c**), it requires more of a stretch.

When playing a phrase like this, with just six notes in each position, quick position shifts are required as you move the shapes up and down the fretboard. This can get a bit tricky in the middle range, because position shifts are required *within* the given phrases on the fourth-through-second strings. Also, when descending, the first three notes are picked down-up-down, and you have to use an upstroke when switching to the next lower string, which will feel uncomfortable at first. The best way to master this is to focus on the *accents*: accenting the first note in each six-note group will create the clarity you need to master this, without expending unnecessary effort.

Now let's move on to a diatonic melodic idea based on five-note shapes that fall on the top two strings (**FIGURE 6**). When ascending (bars 1-3), the pattern alternates repeatedly between the B and high E string, with five notes played per string; when descending (bars 4-6), I switch things up by moving from the high E to the B, and then stay on the B before moving back to the high E, thus playing 10 notes per string.

In this next sequence (**FIGURE 7a**), the phrase ascends, but the fretboard actually moves *down* the fretboard, which is quite unusual. This is actually the reverse of the previous run (**FIGURE 4a**), wherein the melodic shape was successively shifted to higher areas of the fretboard. Here, each six-note group



begins with the index finger, and each successive group starts one note lower within the E Aeolian mode.

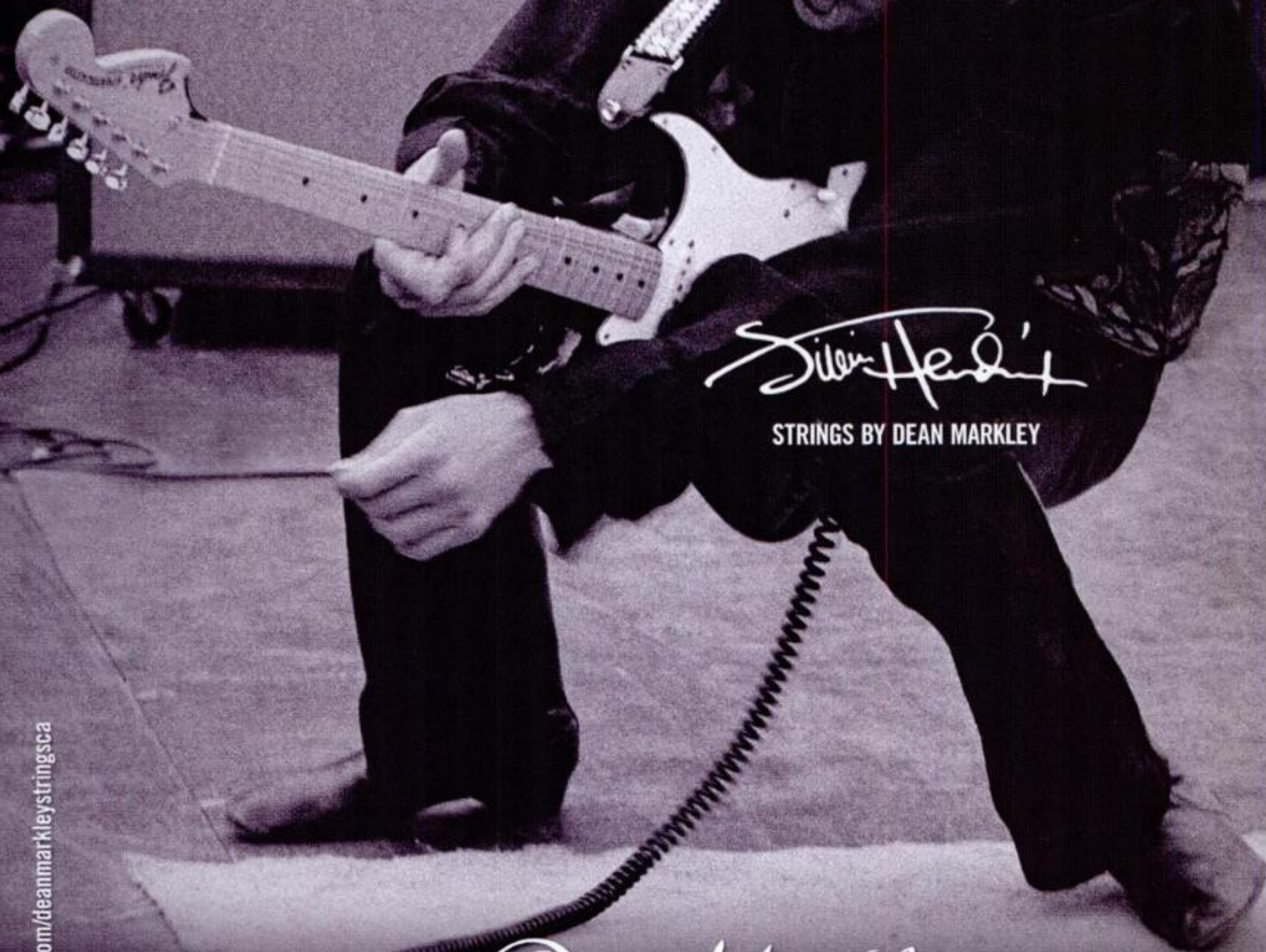
We can make this pattern more interesting by switching to groups of five, like this (**FIGURE 7b**), wherein we begin each subsequent phrase by fretting with the pinkie and shifting down to the next lower note in E Aeolian. When we reverse this riff (**FIGURE 7c**), each phrase begins with the index finger and shifts one note higher as the phrases progress.



PAUL GILBERT: MR. BIG STRETCHES

In this lesson, I'm going to teach you some of my favorite "big-stretch" licks, executed with either big fret-hand stretches or wide intervallic skips. But before we get to the wide-interval licks, I'd like to start with an examination of pick-hand techniques.

I've been doing a lot of teaching



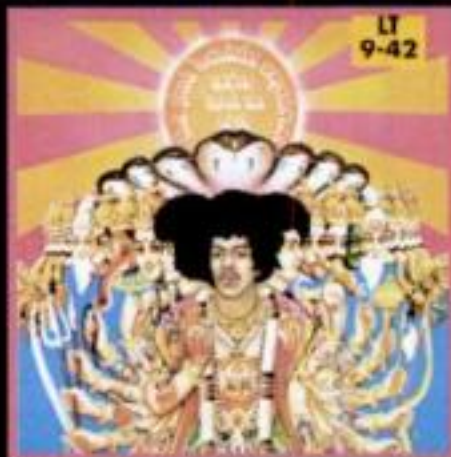
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Dean Markley



PURE NICKEL



NICKEL PLATED STEEL

G3

JOE SATRIANI
JOHN PETRUCCI
PAUL GILBERT

lately, and I love that it forces you to analyze your own playing. For instance, I recently realized that I begin many of my solo phrases with an *upstroke* instead of a downstroke, even if the line starts on the downbeat. This is unusual, because most guitarists use downstrokes on downbeats and upstrokes on upbeats.

For example, here's a lick played in over a slow 12/8 shuffle groove (**FIGURE 1a**): each beat consists of three identical 16th-note triplets, starting with two picks, an upstroke and a downstroke, followed by a pull-off. I like to use alternate picking occasionally, but the most bang-for-your-buck licks that I play are executed with a combination of picked notes, hammer-ons, pull-offs and slides.

One of the most important things when playing a repeated lick like this is to find a good way to get out of it. Here's an example (**FIGURE 1b**), in which I balance this phrase against a series of different sustained notes that are either bent or played with vibrato.

The reason I started with this phrase is that I'm going to add notes to it, one at a time. I will ultimately end up with a right-hand/left-hand pattern that will be applied to a wide-stretch lick. First, I'm adding a D note to the first three notes (**FIGURE 1c**), picked with a downstroke. This results in a four-note shape. The magical thing about this—the thing that will expand your technique—is that you are now playing a lick across three strings. When you play the lick over and over, you discover that the downstroke on the fourth note, which is on the G string, is followed by an upstroke on the high E, which forces you to skip over the B string.

Now I'm going to add one more note, F, to create a five-note shape (**FIGURE 2**): following the initial upstroke on the high E string, I pick the B string with a downstroke and pull off from the notes G, F and E, then end the phrase with the D, picked with a downstroke. This lick sounds good over either Dm or Am.

This is now starting to turn into a genuine "shred" lick, especially if you try to make those five notes go by really quickly. Notice also that the picking technique for this lick is identical to the previous four-note lick (**FIGURE 1c**). When playing this lick, it's fun to dig in with the pick hand and get a little bit of the edge of the thumb into the pick attack, because this will yield some

FIGURE 5c

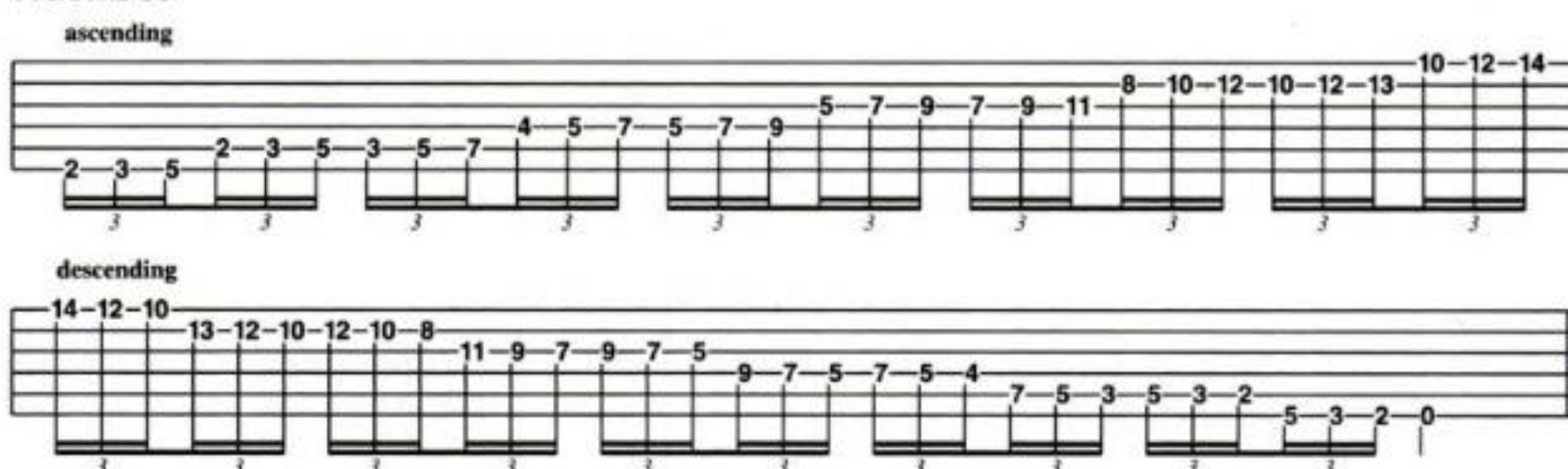


FIGURE 6

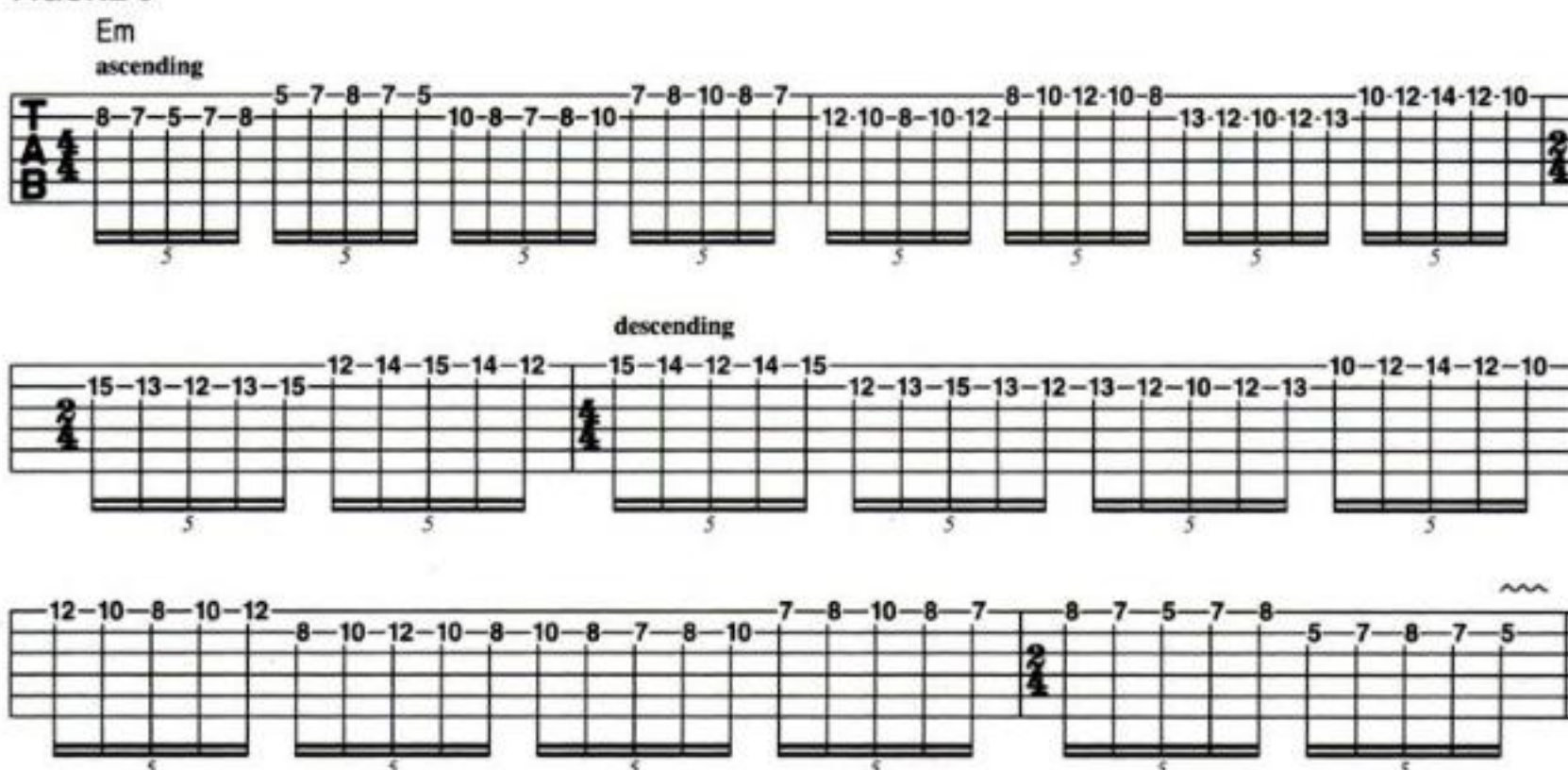


FIGURE 7a

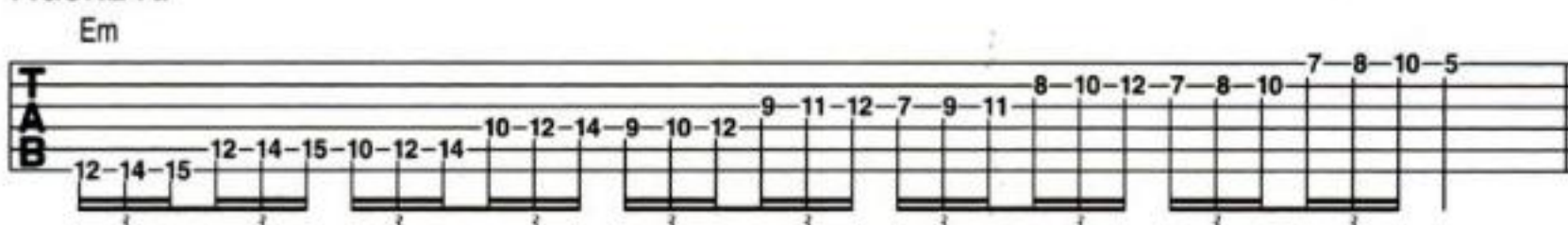


FIGURE 7b

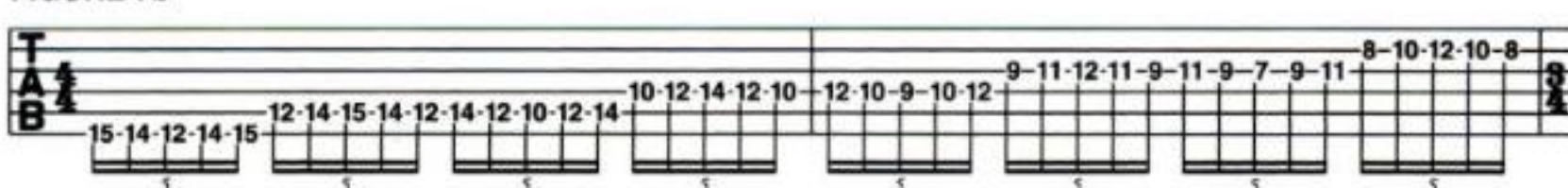
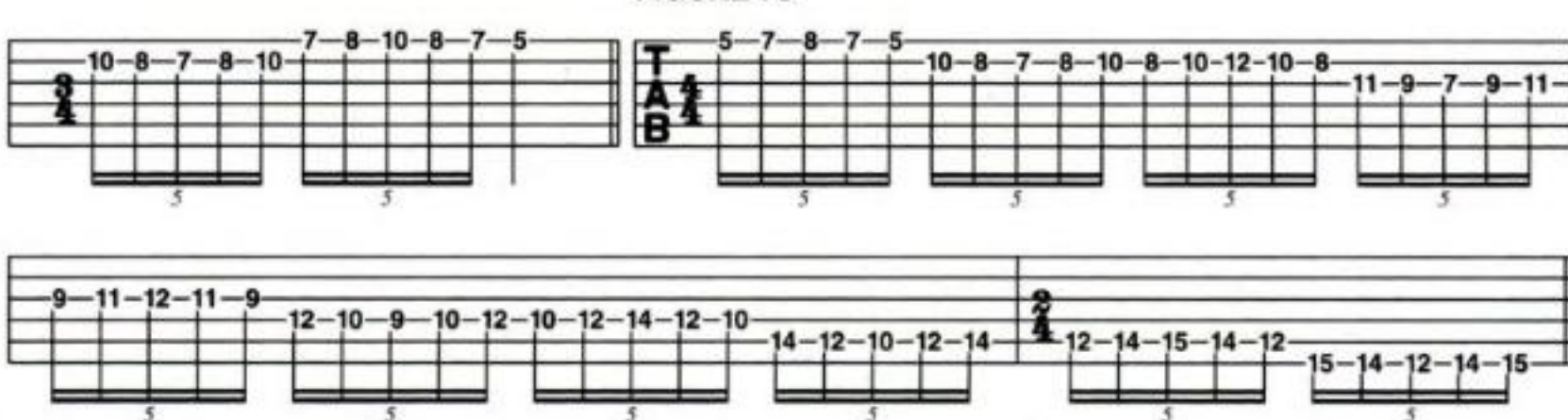


FIGURE 7c



artificial "pinch" harmonics and alter the texture of some of the notes.

And now for the big-stretch moment! Let's use the key of A minor and pick out some well-chosen notes—E, C, A, G and a low C—while using exactly the same *architecture* (the same number of notes played per string) as employed in the last lick (**FIGURE 3**): I begin with one note on the high E string, followed by three notes on the G string, followed by one note on the A string. To me, this lick *feels* the same as this one (**FIGURE 2**) and "phrases" the same way.



So far, we've only done descending licks, so now let's add the ascending part. If we go back to this lick (**FIGURE 2**), we can end it by going back up (**FIGURE 4a**) and run it up and down. Now we have four notes on the downbeat and four on the upbeat, which yields a lick based on 32nd notes. If we apply this motion to the "big stretch" version, we get this (**FIGURE 4b**).

This is a lick that everyone thinks I execute with sweep picking. People come up to me and say, "Dude, I love your sweep picking!" but the truth is I almost never sweep pick. It fools people because

GEORGE LYNCH

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G3

JOE SATRIANI
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it sounds like an arpeggio, and you can hear the wide intervallic span akin to sweep picking. And it really sounds like sweep picking when you add *sliding taps* to the phrase (FIGURE 4c). Following the initial hammer-ons, I use my pick-hand index finger to tap the high E string at the 20th fret, and then I slide the tap up to the 24th fret and back before pulling off to the fret-hand pinkie at the 17th fret.

Another way to get a "wide-stretch" sound without stretching your fret hand is to play wide intervals. Here's a lick in E minor (FIGURE 5a): it's based on an E minor triad, made up of only the notes E, G and B, played in various octaves. I prefer this type of phrase to typical sweep-picked arpeggios, because, generally speaking, sweep arpeggios are played straight up and down. Other instrumentalists, such as sax players, pianists and violinists, often split up the arpeggios in order to invent musical phrases that have more interesting melodic contours, and that's the approach I'm taking here.

With this lick, I go directly from E to B, skipping the G that falls in between, and then go from G to a higher E, skipping the B that falls between those two notes. The concept is then applied to the remainder of the phrase, and this creates these little two-note chord shapes (FIGURE 5b). There are, of course, many more places these two-note shapes can be played on the guitar, and the fun part is discovering where those are.

Having done that, I began to search for some other "shapes" to use. Triads are great because they sound very "classical," but when played in a blues rock type of setting, they can sound a little square, so I applied this concept to the E minor blues scale (E G A B \flat B D) and left out the fourth scale degree, A, which yielded this lick (FIGURE 6).

Now let's apply this same approach to the E Dorian mode (E F \sharp G A B C \sharp D), using only the root note, E, the minor third, G, the major sixth, C \sharp and the flat seventh, G (FIGURE 7a). I loved this lick so much that I devised an alternate fingering for it (FIGURE 7b).

This is such a useful phrase. When we do a G3 jam on Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze," I don't have to play it fast, because it is the *killingest* big string-skipping phrase. Half of it is about finding the notes I like, and the other half is finding a fingering that works. 🌟

Paul Gilbert

FIGURE 1a

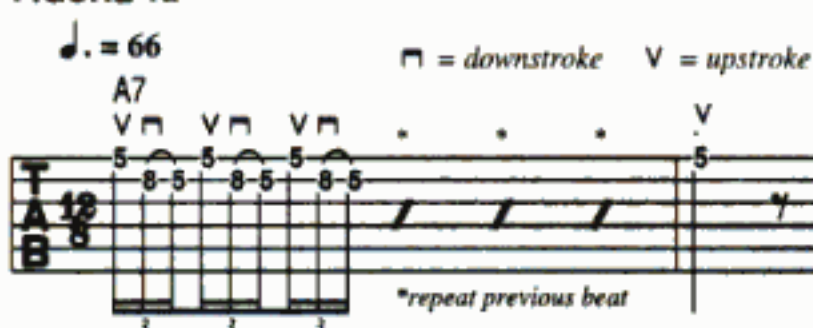


FIGURE 1b

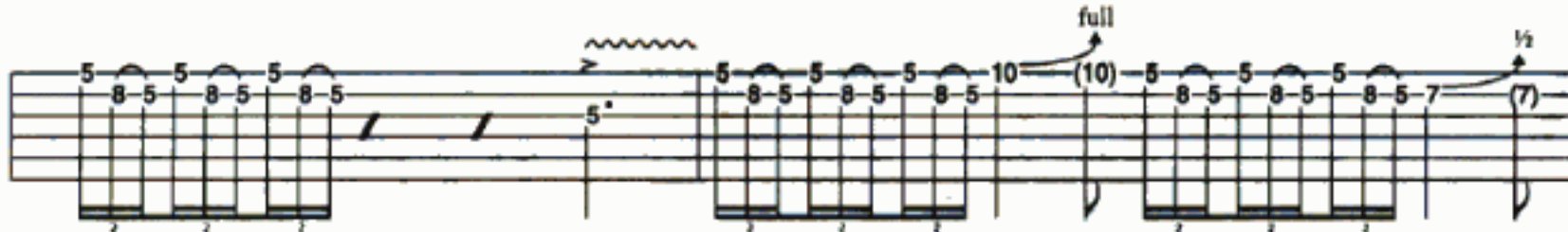
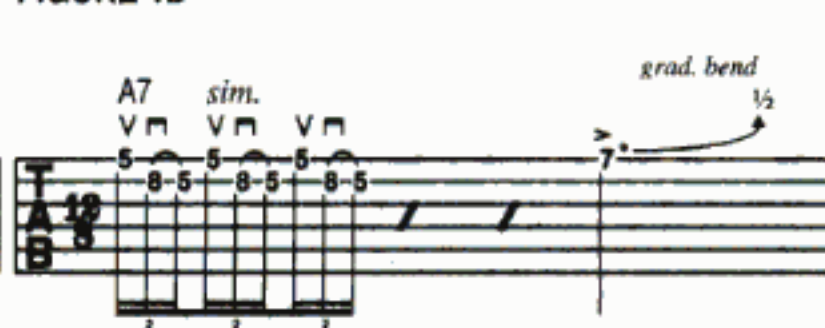


FIGURE 1c



FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

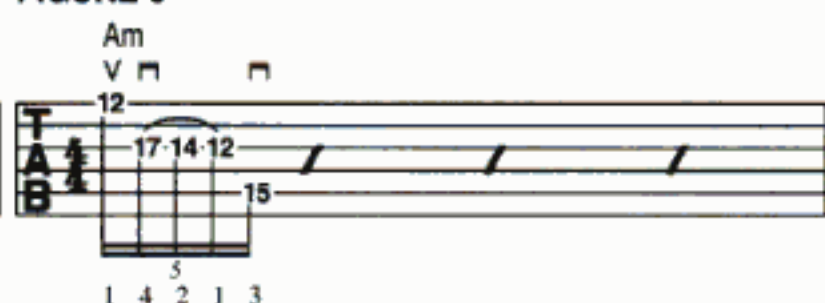


FIGURE 4a



FIGURE 4b

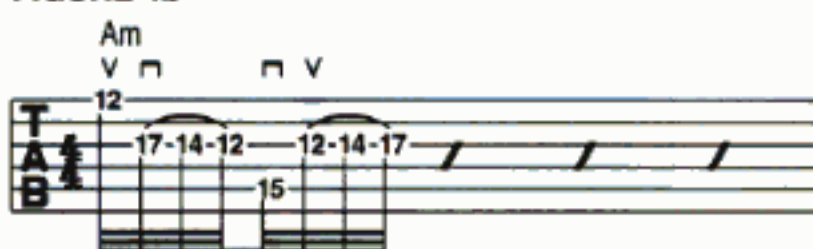


FIGURE 4c

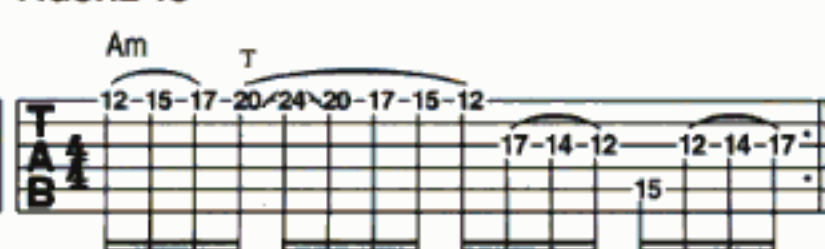


FIGURE 5a



FIGURE 5b

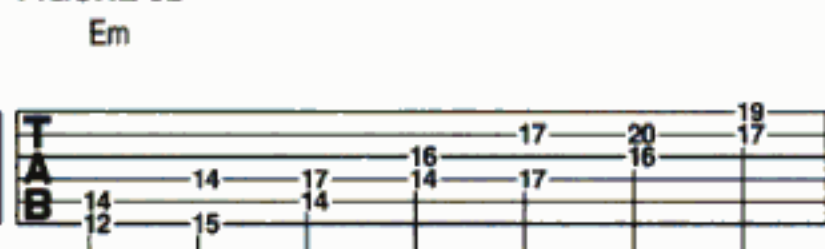


FIGURE 6

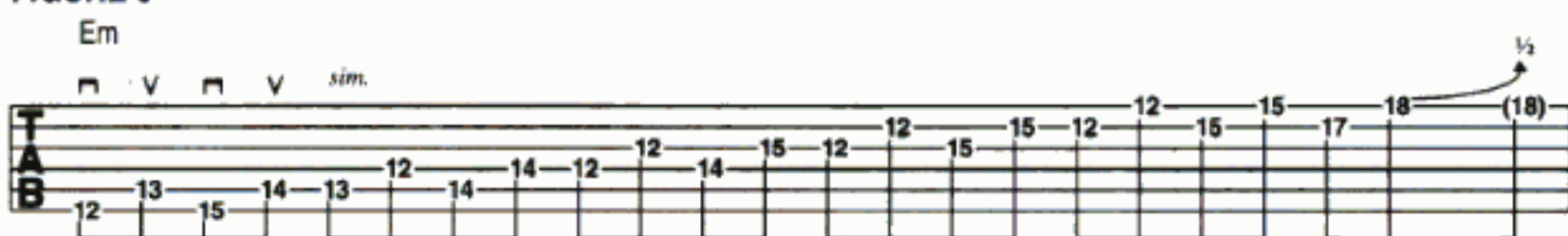


FIGURE 7a

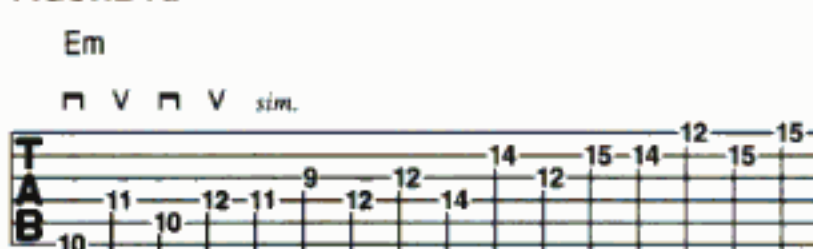
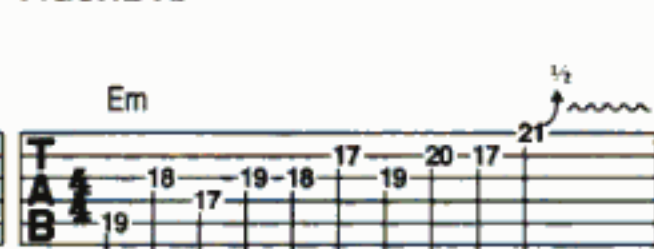


FIGURE 7b



2 1 1 3 2 1 3 4 1 4

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Mastodon "Colony of Birchmen"

Display Name: **BIRCHMEN**

Chan One EQ	On	0.0	150	2600	6000	-7
GeNetX	Chan1	Britstak	Brit4x12	1	Britstak	Vntg4x12
Chan Two EQ	On	0.0	150	2100	3200	0
Tone	Ch1/Ch2	79/99	-6/-3	6/4	-2/4	72/65
	On/Off	Param1	Param2	Param3	Param4	Param5
Wah - Pickup	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Compression	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Whammy/IPS/Talk	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Stompbox	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Noise Gate	On	Silencer	37	0	-	-
Chorus/Mod	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Delay	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Reverb	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Exp Assign	Exp1	Vol Pre	0	99	-	-

Guns N' Roses "November Rain"

Display Name: **NOVEMBER**

Chan One EQ	On	0.0	150	550	3200	5
GeNetX	Chan1	Acoustic	Direct	1	Britstak	Brit4x12
Chan Two EQ	On	0.0	150	2200	5200	2
Tone	Ch1/Ch2	99/99	0/-3	0/11	0/5	99/60
	On/Off	Param1	Param2	Param3	Param4	Param5
Wah - Pickup	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Compression	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Whammy/IPS/Talk	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Stompbox	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Noise Gate	On	Silencer	37	0	-	-
Chorus/Mod	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Delay	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Reverb	On	Hall	0	52	33	30
Exp Assign	Exp1	Vol Pre	0	99	-	-

Godsmack "The Enemy"

Display Name: **ENEMY**

Chan One EQ	On	0.0	150	1100	5000	2
GeNetX	Chan1	Rectified	Vntg4x12	1	Rectified	Vntg4x12
Chan Two EQ	On	0.0	150	1100	5000	0
Tone	Ch1/Ch2	66/80	0/-2	1/2	5/4	80/75
	On/Off	Param1	Param2	Param3	Param4	Param5
Wah - Pickup	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Compression	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Whammy/IPS/Talk	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Stompbox	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Noise Gate	On	Silencer	15	0	-	-
Chorus/Mod	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Delay	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Reverb	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Exp Assign	Exp1	Vol Pre	0	99	-	-

Atreury "Shameful"

Display Name: **SHAMEFUL**

Chan One EQ	On	0.0	150	1600	3000	-2
GeNetX	Chan1	Rectified	Vntg4x12	1	Mdmgain	Brit4x12
Chan Two EQ	On	0.0	150	1900	3200	-2
Tone	Ch1/Ch2	50/72	0/-4	10/5	4/5	87/86
	On/Off	Param1	Param2	Param3	Param4	Param5
Wah - Pickup	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Compression	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Whammy/IPS/Talk	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Stompbox	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Noise Gate	On	Silencer	20	0	-	-
Chorus/Mod	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Delay	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Reverb	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Exp Assign	Exp1	Vol Pre	0	99	-	-

Jimi Hendrix "Spanish Castle Magic"

Display Name: **CASTLE**

Chan One EQ	On	0.0	150	2600	5000	0
GeNetX	Chan1	Britstak	Brit4x12	1	Britstak	Brit4x12
Chan Two EQ	On	0.0	150	2600	5000	0
Tone	Ch1/Ch2	10/51	-5/-5	6/5	8/7	88/91
	On/Off	Param1	Param2	Param3	Param4	Param5
Wah - Pickup	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Compression	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Whammy/IPS/Talk	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Stompbox	On	Big MP	50	80	-	50
Noise Gate	On	Silencer	37	0	-	-
Chorus/Mod	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Delay	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Reverb	Off	-	-	-	-	-
Exp Assign	Exp1	Vol Pre	0	99	-	-

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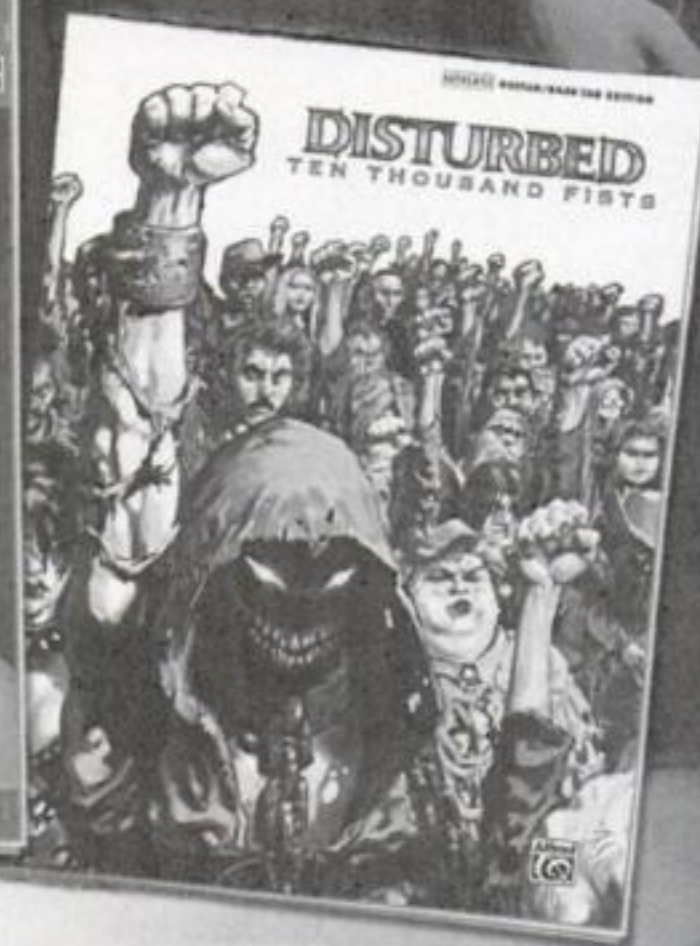
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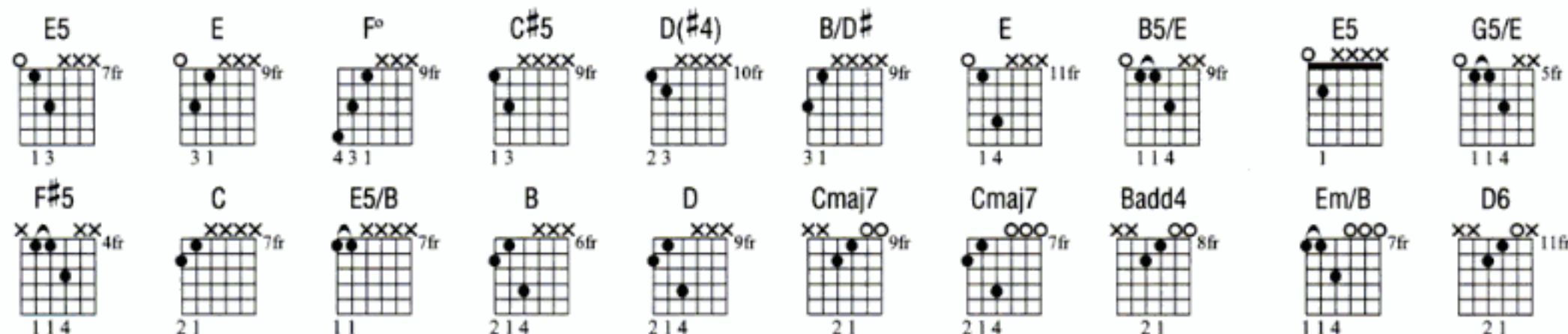
"COLONY OF BIRCHMEN" MASTODON

As heard on **BLOOD MOUNTAIN (REPRISE)**
Words and Music by **Mastodon** * Transcribed by **Jeff Perrin**

Gtrs. are tuned down one whole step (low to high: D G C F A D).

Bass tuning (low to high): D G C F.

All notes and chords sound in the key of D minor, one whole step lower than written.



A Intro (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 126

N.C.(Em)

Gtr. 2 (elec. w/dist.)

1

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.)

let ring

let ring

B Verse (0:07, 0:49)

1. This forest is growing faster than I can tell
Cell structure eats away at a massive swell
2. White faces coming closer with every step
Earth envelopes taking breath without every happenstance

E5 E F° E5 E F° E5 E F° C#5 D(#4) B/D#

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (w/heavy dist.)

Rhy. Fig. 1

end Rhy. Fig. 1

5

Bass

(1.) Seems however I'm a victim of circumstance
(2.) Carve my teeth out ripping through the sheep's head curse

E5 E F° E5 E F° E5 E F° C#5 D(#4) B/D#

Gtrs. 1 and 2 repeat Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 5)

Bass

9

C Chorus (0:30, 1:12, 2:12)

(1.) Hunt for ogres and
(2.) Hunter gatherer dwarves

(3.) now

E

B5/E

Gtr. 2

P.M.

P.M.

13

Gtr. 1 P.M.

Bass

(1.) lion slicer
(2.) Ridden from the cave

(D5/E)

(E5)

15

P.M.

P.M.

(2nd time on 1st Chorus) go back to B 2nd Verse

Run (Run) with (with) death
(E5) (F#5) (G5) (A5) (Em)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Gtr. 2

17

P.M.

Gtr. 1

Bass

D (1:31, 2:31)

E5 G5/E F#5 E5 (D/F#)

20 Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

Gtr. 2 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. let ring

Gtr. 1 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. let ring

Bass

E (1:46, 2:47)

C E5/B B D

Gtrs. 1 and 2 Rhy. Fig. 2 end Rhy. Fig. 2

24 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass

C E5/B B D

Gtrs. 1 and 2 repeat Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 24)

27 Bass

F Bridge (1:55, 2:55)

Gone away My heart's
gone away taking heart's
everything away My heart's
gone away Take it
Cmaj7 Badd4 D6
Gtr. 4 (acous.) (play 4 times)
let ring

30 Cmaj7 Em/B B D (play 4 times)
*Gtrs. 1 and 2 let ring (play 4 times)

*doubled by acous.
Bass (play 4 times)

*Substitute notes in parenthesis 4th time.

G (3:13)

now

N.C.(D/E)

(E5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

33 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass

(D/E)

Rhy. Fig. 3

36 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass

H Guitar Solo (3:28)

(D/E)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 3 four times (see bar 37)

end Rhy. Fig. 3

Gtr. 3

39 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass

(E5)

w/pick and finger

42

Bass

45 (D/E) Gtr. 3 w/pick and finger full trem. pick

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 three times (see bar 41)

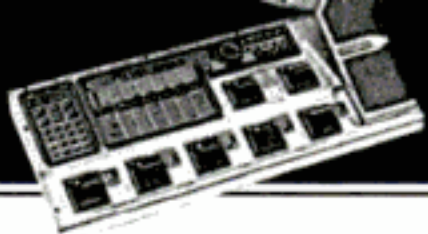
47 (E5)

49 (D/E)

51 (E5) 1/2

53 (D/E) trem. pick (E5)

57 E5 Gtr. 3 full Gtr. 2 Gtr. 1 Bass



"SPANISH CASTLE MAGIC" THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE

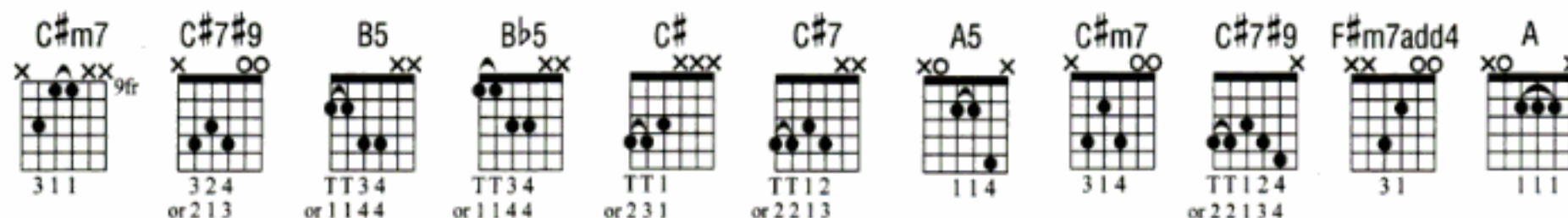
As heard on **AXIS: BOLD AS LOVE** (MCA)

Words and Music by **Jimi Hendrix** * Transcribed by **Andy Aledort**

Gtr. is tuned down one half step (low to high: **E^b A^b D^b G^b B^b E^b**).

8-string Bass tuning (low to high): **E^b A^b D^b G^b**.

All notes and chords sound in the key of **C**, one half step lower than written.



A Intro (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 100 (♩ = ♩)

Elec. Gtr. (w/dist.) **C#m7** (E5) (C#5) **C#7#9** (E5) (C#5) **C#7#9**

1 (0:03)

Hagstrom 8-stg. Bass (played by Jimi Hendrix) w/pick (two gtrs. arr. for one)

let ring

let ring

B 1st Verse (0:13)

It's very far away

(E5) (C#5) **C#7#9** (E5) (C#5) **C#7#9** **B5**

Notes on (6) and (5) strings are fretted w/thumb until C

* repeat previous chord

Bass Fig. 1

(repeat previous bar)

It takes about a half a day to get there if we travel by my uh dragonfly

Bb5 (A5) (G#5) **C#**

P.M. P.M.

* Middle note is sounded unintentionally.

end Bass Fig. 1

No it's not in Spain but all the same you know it's a groovy name and the wind's just right Hey

B5 **Bb5** (A5) (G#5) **C#7**

Gtr. P.M. P.M.

Bass repeats Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 6)

C 1st Chorus (0:32)

Hang on my darling Hang on if you want to

A5 (F#m7add4) A5 (F#m7add4) (E5) (C#5)

14 Gtr. Bass

go (E5) (C#5) Hear it's a really groovy place it's a (G#5)

17

uh just a little bit a said uh Spanish castle magic (F#/E) (E5) C#m7 (E5) C#m7

19

let ring --

D 2nd Verse (0:52)

The clouds are really low and they overflow with cotton candy and battlegrounds

Gtr. B5 Bb5 (A5) (G#5)

22 Notes on (6) and (5) strings are fretted w/thumb until bar 29.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 6)

* Middle note is sounded unintentionally.

red and brown But it's all in your mind Don't think your time on

25 C#7#9 B5 Bb5 (A5)

bad things Just float your little mind around Look out Ooh

28 (G#5) C#

E 2nd Chorus (1:12)

Hang on my darling yeah Hang on if you want to

A5 (F#m(4)) (E5) (C#5) C#7#9

Gtr. let ring ---, w/bar full full

Bass Bass Fig. 2

go That's right ha Look out you can see you make love in a

(E5) C#m7 (G#5)

Just a little bit of Spanish castle magic (spoken) Yeah baby here's some ha

(F#/E) (E5) C#m7

let ring ---, end Bass Fig. 2

F Guitar Solo (1:31)

Yeah O.K. babe O.K. It's all in your mind babe

(C#5)

full full full full full full full full

Ow Yeah

Bass Fig. 3

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 41)

48

Gtr.

Bass

* ③ stg. is caught under ring finger

50 Gtr. **Hang on my darling Hey Hang on hang on if you**
(F#m) A5 (F#5) (E5) (C#5)
full full full
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 30)

53

want to go (E5) (C#5) Ho damn heh That's right babe listen (E) A little bit of

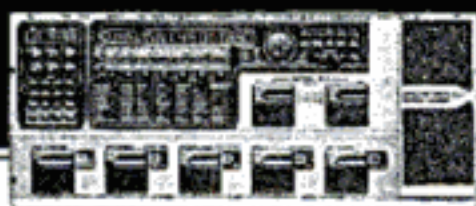
full 1/4 semi harm. 1/2

56 **Spanish** (E5) **castle** (C#5) **magic** C#7#9 (E5) **hey** C#m7 **Little** **bit of**

Gtr. **Bass** *Bass Fig. 4*

[illegible]

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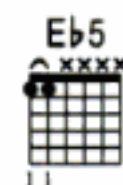
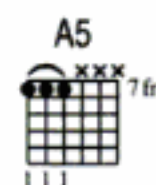
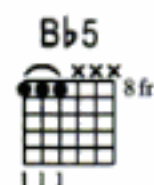
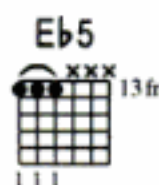
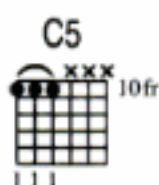
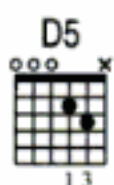
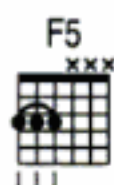
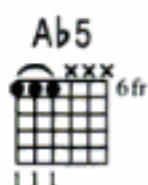
"THE ENEMY" GODSMACK

As heard on **IV** (REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL)

Words and Music by **Sully Erna, Tony Rombola, Rob Merrill and Shannon Larkin** * Transcribed by **Jeff Perrin**

All guitars are in drop-D tuning (low to high: D A D G B E).

Bass tuning (low to high): D A D G.



A Intro (0:00)

Moderately Fast ♩ = 164

D5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (elec. w/dist.)

*P.M.

1 **TAB** **B** *(repeat previous two bars)* 2

*Gtr. 2 w/light P.M.
**repeat previous chord

Bass
Bass Fig. 1

2

5 Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist.)

(repeat previous bar)

Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 1

*P.M. gradually release P.M. *end Rhy. Fig. 1*

*Gtr. 2 w/light P.M.

Bass *end Bass Fig. 1*

B Verses (0:12, 1:11)

1. Hey know Oh everybody Mister backstabbin' son of a bitch You're
know everybody knows you try to be like me But even
2. You see You're another shit - talkin' punk to me You're a
see you've been blinded by what you believe And now

D5

Gtr. 3 plays Fill 1 first time on 2nd Verse (see below)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

9

Bass
Bass Fig. 2

end Bass Fig. 2

- livin' in a world that will soon be dyin' And I
at your best as a man you couldn't equal half of me
- living inspiration shut up for what I never want to be And I
back up and sit down and act like you need to be

D5

F5

13

C Chorus (0:36, 1:35, 3:30)

- I am realizing that

17 D5 C5 Eb5

Bass Fig. 3

end Bass Fig. 3

- everybody's lost their simple ways And

21 D5 C5 Bb5 A5

Fill 1 (1:11)

Gtr. 3 (D5)

now that it's here I see it oh so clearly
D5 C5 Eb5

25 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 17)

(2nd time) skip ahead to **E**
(3rd time) skip ahead to **L** Outro

I've come face to face with the enemy oh the

29 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

D (0:59)

enemy

D5 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 9)

go back to **B** 2nd Verse

37 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

E (1:59)

enemy

D5 Gtrs. 1 and 2

*Gtr. 2 w/light P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 1)

enemy Come to me Come to me Oh

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 5)

45 Gtr. 3

F (2:11)

w/half-time feel

N.C.(D5)

49 Gtr. 3 (w/wah)

don't play 1st time

(C5)

trem. pick

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (w/sub-octave effect)

Rhy. Fig. 2

end Rhy. Fig. 2

Bass

Bass Fig. 4

end Bass Fig. 4

G 1st Guitar Solo (2:23)

(D5)

(C5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see bar 49)

Gtr. 3 (w/wah)

53 trem. pick

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 twice (see bar 44)

57 (D5)

let ring

(C5)

H Bridge (2:35)

So predicting

you're

the

reason

D5 Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5 Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5 F5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (sub-octave effect off)

61 P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

Bass

Bass Fig. 5

end Bass Fig. 5

why
Simple

decision

I

lie

took

me

too

much

D5 Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5 Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5 F5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

65 P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 twice (see bar 61)

time

to fly

Oh

checkmate

D5 Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5 Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5

Eb5 D5 F5 D5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

69 P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

P.M.

Bass

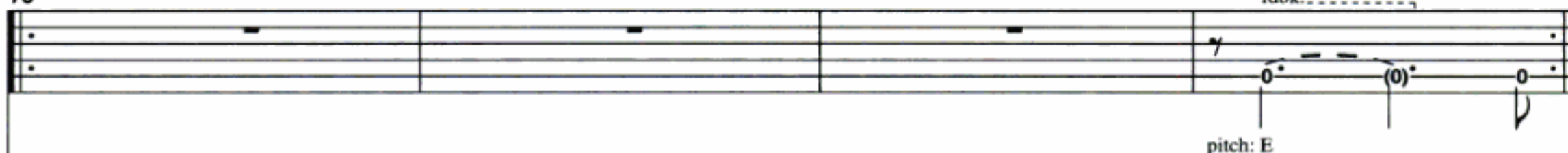
I (2:59)

Checkmate

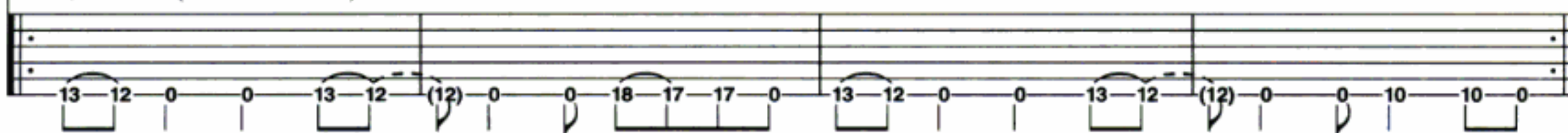
N.C.(D5)

73 Gtr. 3

(C5)
don't play 1st time
fdbk.-----



Gtrs. 1 and 2 (w/sub-octave effect)



Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 twice (see bar 49)

J 2nd Guitar Solo (3:12)

(D5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 twice (see bar 49)

Gtr. 3 (w/wah)

77 trem. pick

(C5)



Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 twice (see bar 49)

81 (D5)

(C5)



K (3:24)

(end half-time feel)

(D5)

Gtr. 3

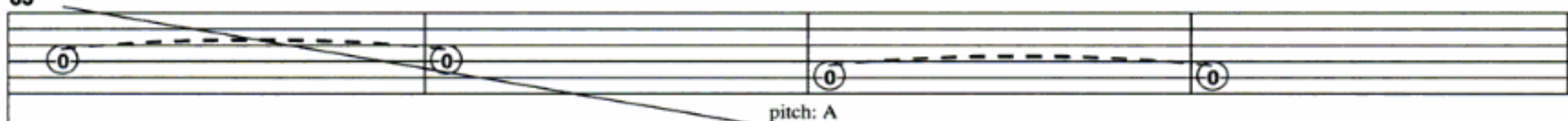
w/bar

85

Ab5

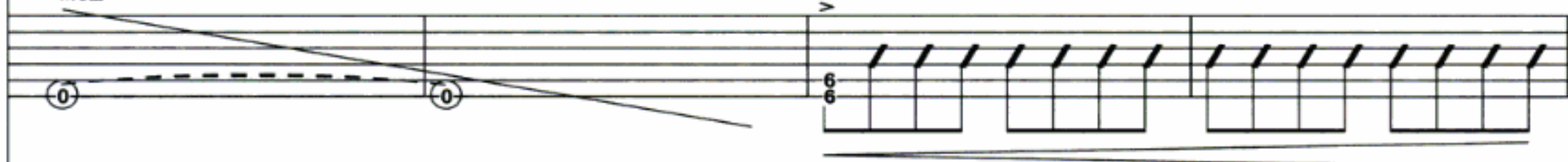
go back to **C** Chorus

fdbk.

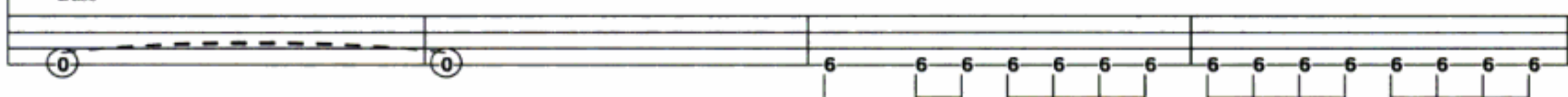


pitch: A

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (sub-octave effect off)
w/bar



Bass



L Outro (3:54)

*enemy

*Come to me

D5

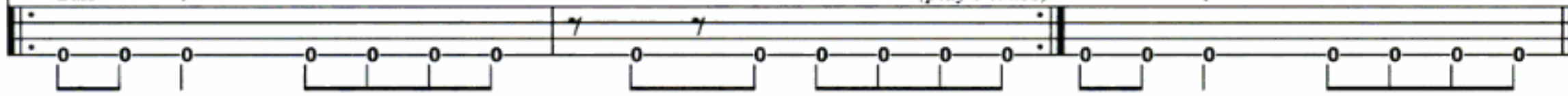
89 Gtrs. 1 and 2

(play 3 times)

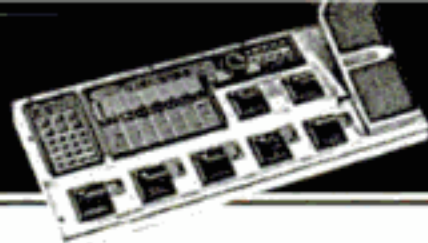


Bass

(play 3 times)



*1st time only



"SHAMEFUL" ATREYU

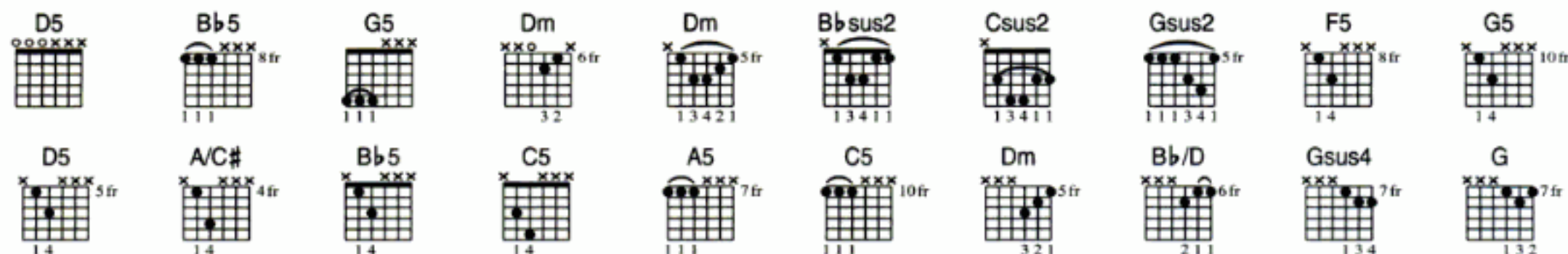
As heard on **A DEATH GRIP ON YESTERDAY** (VICTORY)

Words and Music by Alex Varkatzas, Dan Jacobs, Travis Miguel, Brandon Saller and Mark McKnight * Transcribed by Jeff Perrin

All guitars are in drop-D tuning down one whole step (low to high: C G C F A D).

Bass tuning (low to high): C G C F.

All notes and chords sound in the key of C minor, one step lower than written.



A Intro (0:00)

Fast ♩ = 162

D5

Gtr. 1 (elec. w/dist.)

Rhy. Fig. 1

1

P.M. ...

end Rhy. Fig. 1

Tablature for the Intro section. It shows two guitar staves (Gtr. 1 and Gtr. 2) and a bass staff. Gtr. 1 plays a rhythmic figure of eighth notes with bends. Gtr. 2 plays a similar figure. The bass staff has a simple line. The section ends with a double bar line.

5 Gtr. 1

Bb5

P.M.

G5

P.M.

Tablature for the first part of the verse. It shows three staves: Gtr. 1, Gtr. 2, and Bass. Gtr. 1 and Gtr. 2 play complex figures with bends and vibrato. The bass staff has a simple line. The section ends with a double bar line.

B 1st Verse (0:12)

You should have ran for and days You embrace path that led you You betray
But when you ran you tripped and fell on a path that led you straight to

D5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 1)

Gtr. 2

9

P.M. ...

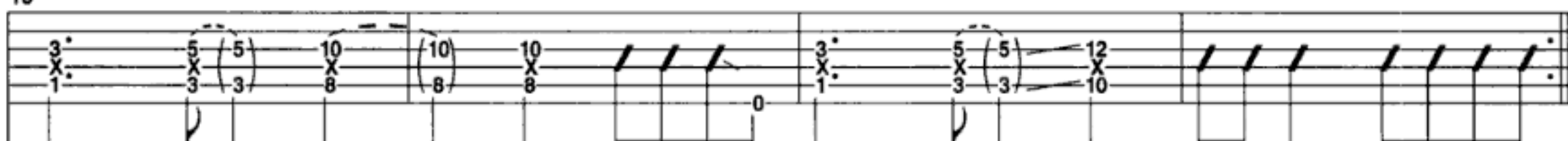
Tablature for the second part of the verse. It shows two staves: Gtr. 1 and Bass. Gtr. 1 plays a rhythmic figure with bends. The bass staff has a simple line. The section ends with a double bar line.

hell (This is (I'm the sick to in say) wounds) (You're a sad cliché) told you so)
(This is my I told you so)

Bb5

G5

13 Gtr. 2



Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 2

end Rhy. Fig. 2

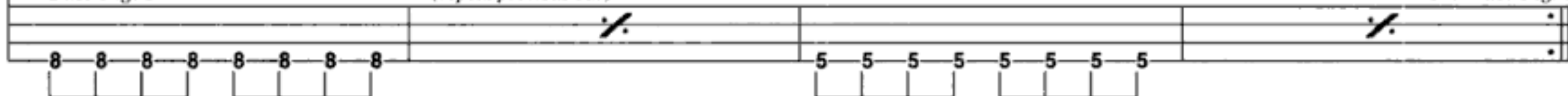


Bass

Bass Fig. 1

(repeat previous bar)

end Bass Fig. 1



C 2nd Verse (0:36)

If you knew what I know

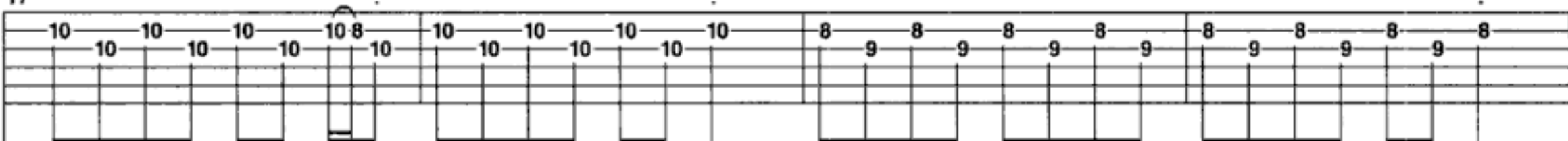
Dm

(w/delay)

17 P.M. P.H. P.M. P.M.

P.M. P.M. P.M.

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.



pitch: A

Rhy. Fig. 3

P.M.

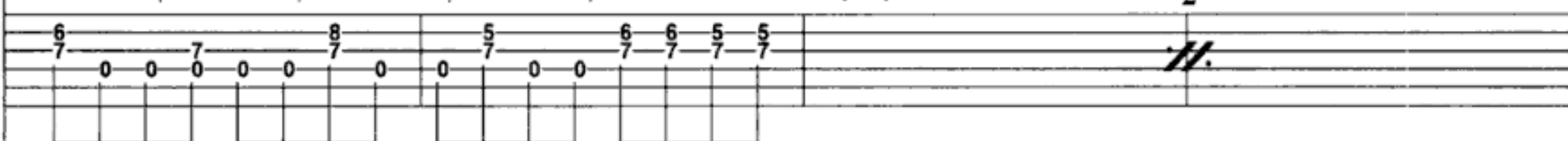
P.M.

P.M.

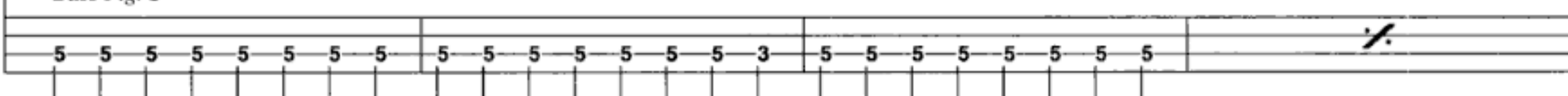
P.M.

(repeat previous two bars)

2



Bass Fig. 2



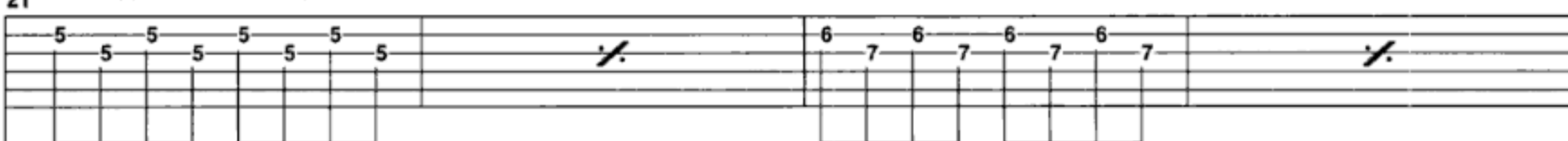
would you move like you do

(Fmaj7)

(Gm7)

21 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

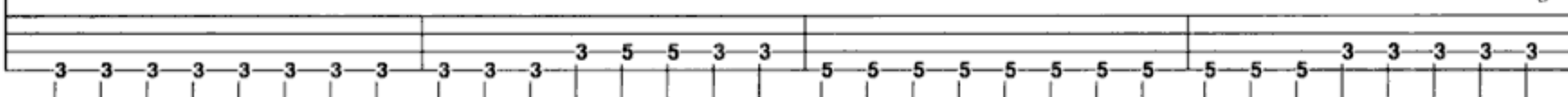


end Rhy. Fig. 3

P.M.



end Bass Fig. 2



hell

Gtr. 3 (elec. w/dist. and delay)

[illegible][illegible]

but did you have a reason why
(Gm7)

29

13 13 17 17 17

P.M. - 7 P.M. - 7 P.M. - 7 P.M. - 7

5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 6 6 6 5 5 10 10 10 10 10 10 8

5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 7 7 7 5 5 10 10 10 10 10 10 9

Here's	to	lowering	caskets	of	old	friends	Choice	and	consequence		We'll birth	a	new
Here's	to	burying	hatchets	with	those	who	you'd never		call	your	friends	We'll birth	a
Dm							Bb sus2						new

[illegible]

(2nd time on 3rd Chorus)
skip ahead to **I** 1., 3., 4., 5.

(4th ending) skip ahead to [G] Bridge

day	with	the	death	of	an	old	and	start over
day	with	the	death	of	an	old	and	

start over

37 Csus2 Gsus2

3 5 3 (3) 5 5 3 5 (5) 5 5 8 (8) 7 5 (5) 8 7 (7) 5 8

3 3 3 3 (3) 3 3 3 (3) 3 3 3 5 5 5 5 (5) 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 (5) 5 5 5

2. **E** (1:24)

start over

Gsus2

N.C.(Dm)

41

Gtr. 1 P.M., P.H. P.M., P.M., P.M.,

You let yourself get carried away Bury this with you a waste

B♭5 C5 D5 A5

Gtr. 3

61 full (hold bend) full (hold bend) full (hold bend) full (hold bend)

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Bass

And now it's time to see what you don't mean to

B♭5 G5

65 full (hold bend) full

H Breakdown (2:38)

me Now it's time to see what you don't

Dm B♭/D

Gtr. 1 (w/phase shifter) Rhy. Fig. 4 end Rhy. Fig. 4

69

Gtr. 2

Bass

(let ring next four bars)

(let ring next four bars)

mean to me
Gsus4 G Bb/D
Gtr. 1

73

Now it's time to see what you don't
D5 Bb5
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 (see bar 69)
Gtr. 2

77

go back to [D] 3rd Chorus

mean to me
C5 Bb5 G5
(phase shifter off)
P.M. P.M.

81

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

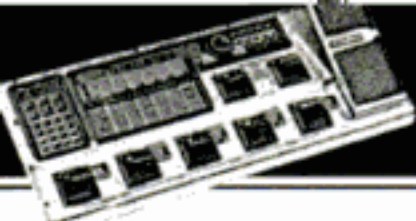
Bass

I (3:23)

Bb5 G5
Gtrs. 1 and 2
P.M. P.M.

85

Bass



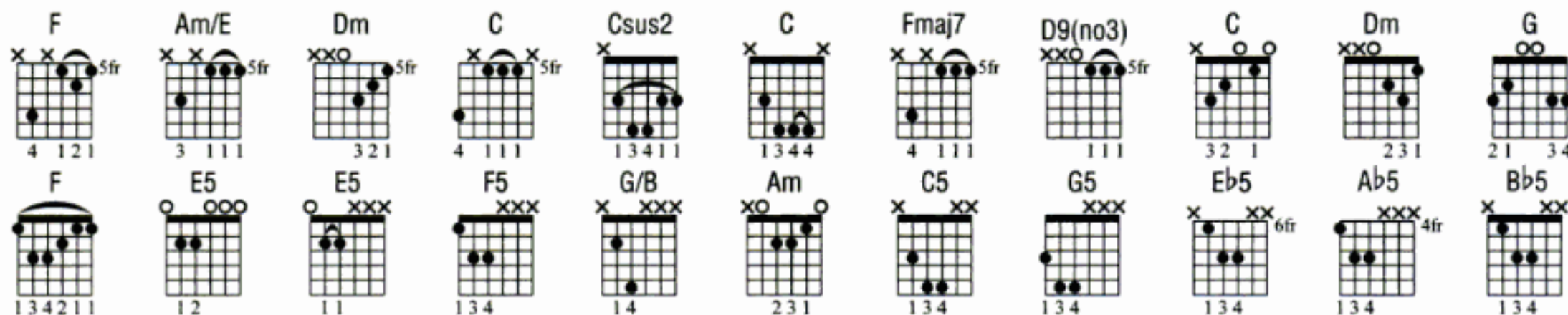
"NOVEMBER RAIN" GUNS N' ROSES

As heard on **USE YOUR ILLUSION I** (Geffen)
Words and Music by **W. Axl Rose** * Transcribed by **Andy Aledort**

All gtrs. are tuned down one half step (low to high: **E^b A^b D^b G^b B^b E^b**).

Bass tuning (low to high): **E^b A^b D^b G^b**.

All pitches sound in the key of B, one half step lower than written.



A Intro (0:00)

Slowly ♩ = 78

N.C.(F)

Gtr. 1 (piano arr. for gtr.)

fingerstyle

1 T 4/4 17 (13) F Am/E Dm let ring - 1

5 C F Dm C let ring - -

9 F C/E Dm let ring -

13 C Csus2 C Fmaj7 Rhy. Fig. 1

17 D9(no3) C Fmaj7 D9(no3)

Gtr. 1

Bass (w/chorus) w/pick

B 1st Verse (1:13)

When I look into your eyes I can see a love restrained

Fmaj7

D9(no3)

C

Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 16)

let ring throughout

22

end Rhy. Fig. 1

Bass Fig. 1

But darlin' when I hold you don't you know I feel the same

Yeah

Fmaj7

D9(no3)

C

27

Gtr. 2

Bass

end Bass Fig. 1

C 1st Chorus (1:38)

Nothin' lasts forever

and we both know hearts can change

Dm

G

C

32

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 3 (acous.)
Rhy. Fig. 2

Bass
Bass Fig. 2

end Rhy. Fig. 2

And it's hard to hold a candle

in the cold November rain

Dm

G

C

Gtr. 3 repeats Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 32)

36

D 2nd Verse (2:03)

We've been through this such a long long time just tryin' to kill the pain

Oh

yeah

But

F (Dm) (C) (Csus4) (C) (Csus2)

40 Gtr. 2

Gtr. 3 Rhy. Fig. 3

end Rhy. Fig. 3

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 24)

lovers always come and lovers always go and no one's really sure who's lettin' it go today walking away
we could take the time to lay it on the line I could rest my head just knowin' that you were mine all mine

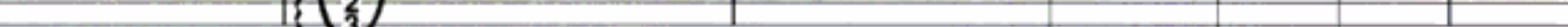
16

E 2nd Chorus (2:40)

So if you want to love
Or I'll just end up walkin'

me then darlin' don't refrain
in the cold November rain

Do you need

48  *Gr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 twice (see bar 40)*
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 32)

F 1st Pre-chorus (3:05)

some time on your own
some time all alone
needs some time on their own O
need some time all alone

Do you need
Ooh ev'rybody

I know it's hard to keep an open heart

when even friends seem out to harm you

52

Grtr. 2

Rhy. Fig. 4

(play 4 times)

Grtr. 3

(play 4 times)

Grtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)

Bass

(play 4 times)

Substitute Bass Fill 1 third time (see below)

Grtr. 5 plays Fill 1 (see below)

G Bridge (3:30)

I know it's hard to keep an open heart

when even friends seem out to harm you

Bass Fill 1 (3:21)

Fill 1 (3:39)

Gtr. 5 (elec. w/dist.)

Tab 5 (view index):

Tab 5 (view index):

whoa

G

Gtr. 4

Bass

63

H 1st Guitar Solo (3:57)

C

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 4 (w/light dist.)

let ring throughout

Bass

Bass Fig. 3

F

Dm

66

"NOVEMBER RAIN"

GNX4 powered

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69 **C** **Gtr. 5** **Dm** **full**

Gtr. 2
let ring throughout

Gtr. 4

Bass **end Bass Fig. 3**

72 **G** **C** **full** **1/2** **1/2**

75 **Dm** **G**

The score is written for five guitar parts (Gtr. 1-5) and a bass line. Measure 69 starts with a C chord and a Dm chord. Measure 72 has a G chord and a C chord. Measure 75 has a Dm chord and a G chord. The score includes various guitar techniques such as bends, vibrato, and specific fretting patterns.

77 **C** Sometimes I

Gtr. 5: (9) (9) 12-10-9 13 (13) 10-12-10-9 13 (13) 10-12-10-9 15 (15) 15 (15) 15 (15)

Gtr. 2: 3 2 0 1 1 0 1 0 2 3 0 3

Gtr. 4: 2 0 1 2 0 1 2 0 1 1 (Gtr. 4 out)

Bass: 3 3 0 3 3 3 3 3 3 0 3 3 3 3

I Pre-chorus (4:45)
 need some time on my own Sometimes I need sometime all alone Ooh everybody
 F G F G
 Gtrs. 2 and 3 play Rhy. Fig. 4 four times (see bar 52)

79 Gtr. 5: 13 (13) 13 full 5 7 5 (5) 5 7 (7) 5 7 7 5 6 full (6) (6) 5 6

Bass: 1 3 3 2 3 5 5 7 5 5

needs some time on their own Ooh don't you know you need some time all alone
 F G F G

83 1/2 5 (5) 5 7 (7) 5 7 (7) 7 5 7 5 7 6 5 5 7 (7) 7 9 10 10-12 14 16 17 19
 (Gtrs. 2 and 3 hold G chord until **J**)

Bass: 1 3 5 1 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

J 2nd Guitar Solo (5:13)

F Dm C Csus4 C F
 Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 twice simile (see bar 40)
 Gtr. 4 plays Fill 2 (see below)

88 Gtr. 5: 18 full 20 20 20 (20) (20) (20) 20 18 17 18 full 18 17 1/2 17 (17) 17 1/2 (17) 15 17 18 15 17 18

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 63)

Fill 2 (5:25)
 Gtr. 4 (F)

13-12 15 12 13-15 12 13 14 12 12-14 10-12 9 10 (12)

Fill 3 (5:37)

Gtr. 5: 15 (15) 13

93

Dm C Csus4 C Csus2

15 17 18 15 17 (17) 17 15 (15) (15) 13 15 13 14 13 15 13 13 (13) 14 13 15 13 13 (13) 13 14 13 15 15 13 15 13 12 13 12 13 12 15 12 15 15 15

1/2 full full

K 3rd Verse (5:37)

And when your fears subside and shadows still remain

F Dm C Csus4 C F

Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 twice simile (see bar 40)
Gtr. 5 plays Fill 3 (see previous page)

oh yeah

I know that you can

96

Gtr. 2 Bass

let ring

L 3rd Chorus (6:02)

love me when there's no one left to blame

Dm C Csus4 C

So never mind the darkness

Dm
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 one and one half times (see bar 32)

101

let ring

we still can find a way

G C Dm

Nothin' lasts forever

105

even cold November rain

G C G/B Am G F G C

109

Gtr. 4 Gtr. 2 Bass

let ring let ring let ring

H Interlude (6:49)

(C5)
Gtr. 1 (piano arr. for gtr.)

(Abmaj7) (Bb6)

C5
Gtr. 1 plays Riff A three times (see bar 115)

115 Riff A

Gtr. 4

C5
119 Gtr. 4

(Abmaj7) (Bb6)

C5

(Abmaj7)

(Bb6)

I Outro (7:11)

C5
Gtr. 5 1/2

G5

F5

Eb5

Ab5

Bb5

126 C5
Gtr. 5 16-15-16-15-13 16-13-16 13-15-13 16 13 15-16 13 16-15-16 15 15 (15) (15) 13 15-16 13 15-16 13 15-13-15-13

Gtr. 2

Gtr. 4

Bass

end Bass Fig. 4

128 C5 G5 F5 full Eb5 Ab5 Bb5
Gtr. 5 1/2 19 19 20 (20) 20-19 20 15-16 15 16 15-16 15-13 15-13 15-16 13

Gtr. 2 Rhy. Fig. 5

Gtr. 4 Rhy. Fig. 5a

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 five times (see bar 123)

131 C5
You're not the only one You're not the only one
15-16-15-16-15-13 16-15-13-15-13 16 16-13-15-16 13-15-16-15-13 16 15-13 16 15-13 16-13-15-16 16-13-16-15-13 15-13 15-13-12-13-12 15-13 13-15

3

end Rhy. Fig. 5

end Rhy. Fig. 5a

133 G5 F5 Eb5 Ab5 Bb5
Don't ya think that you need somebody Don't ya think that you need someone Everybody needs somebody
19 19 20 (20) 20-19 19 19 17 19 17 20 (20) (20) (20)

Gtrs. 2 and 4 play Rhy. Figs. 5 and 5a three times simile (see bar 128)

Gtr. 5 1/2

You're not the only one **You're not the only one**

C5

136

Don't ya think that you need somebody **Don't ya think that you need someone** **Everybody needs somebody**

G5 F5 full Eb5 Ab5 Bb5

138

You're not the only one **You're not the only one** **Don't ya think you need somebody**

C5 full full G5

141

Don't ya think that you need someone **Everybody needs somebody** **You're not the only one**

F5 full Eb5 Ab5 Bb5 C5

144

You're not the only one **Don't ya think that you need somebody** **Don't ya think that you need someone**

Gtr. 5 G5 F5 full Eb5

147

Everybody needs somebody

Gtr. 4 Gtrs. 2 and 4

150

Free Time (8:26)

Gtr. 5 Gtr. 4 Bass

150

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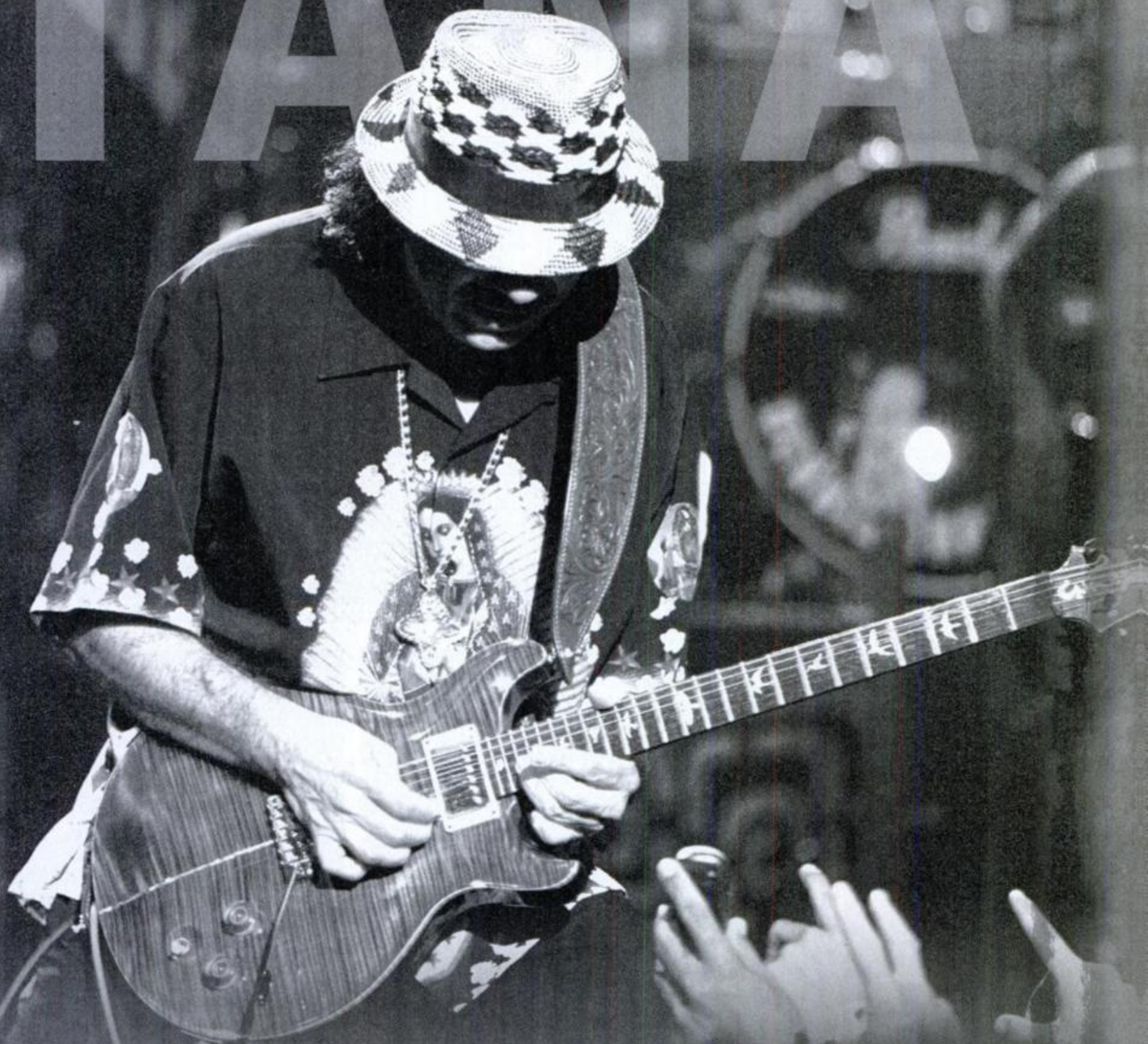


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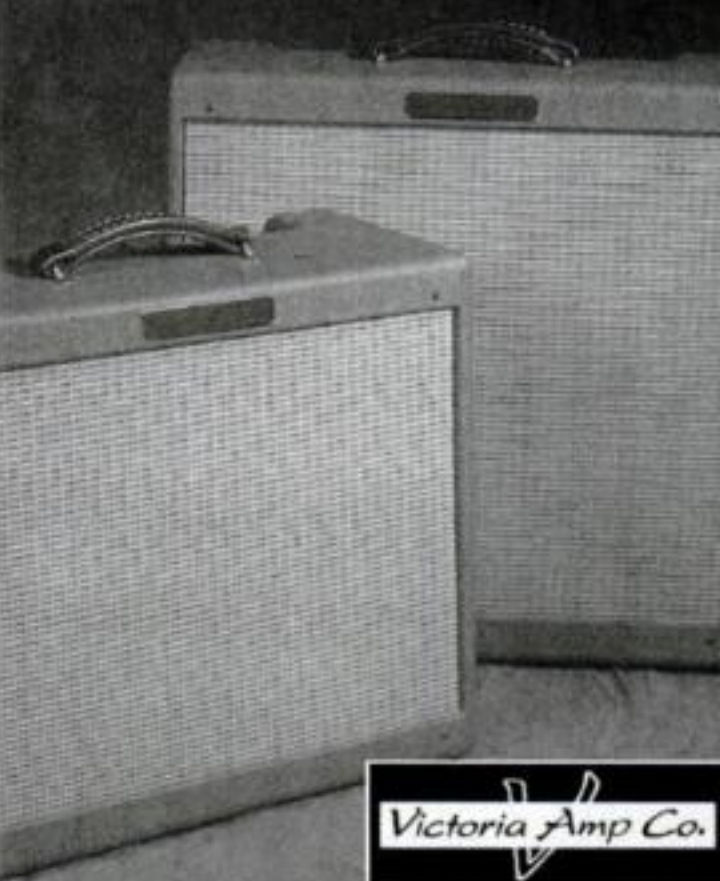
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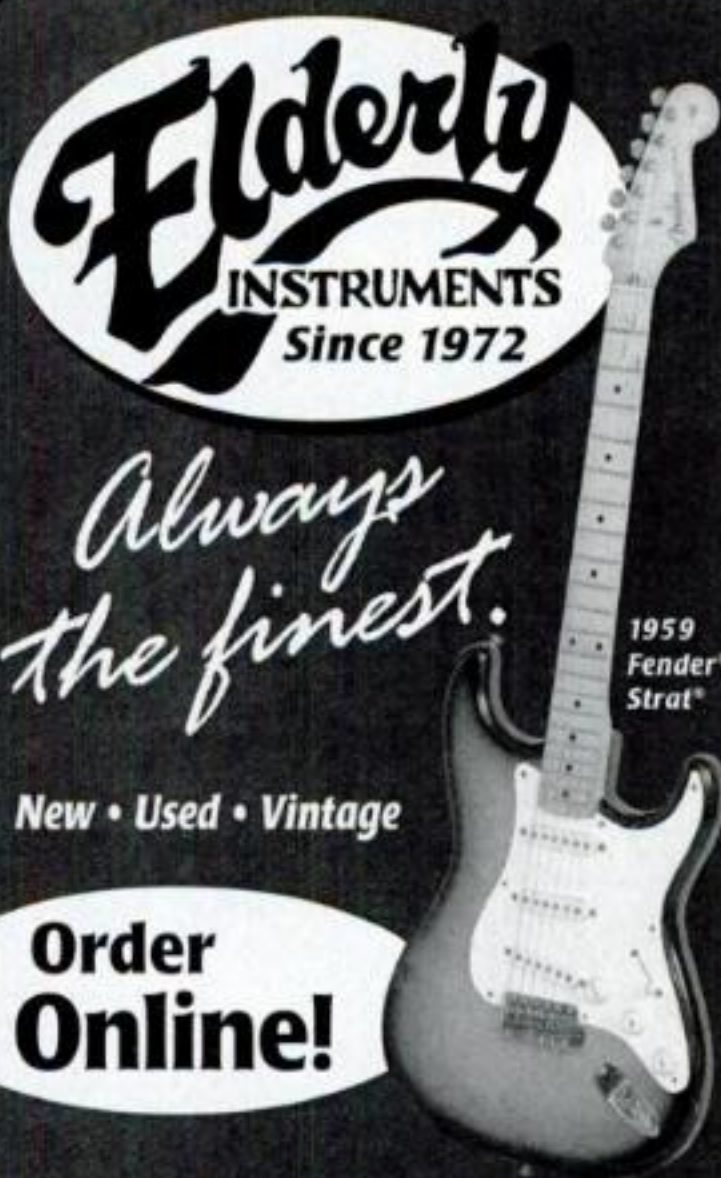
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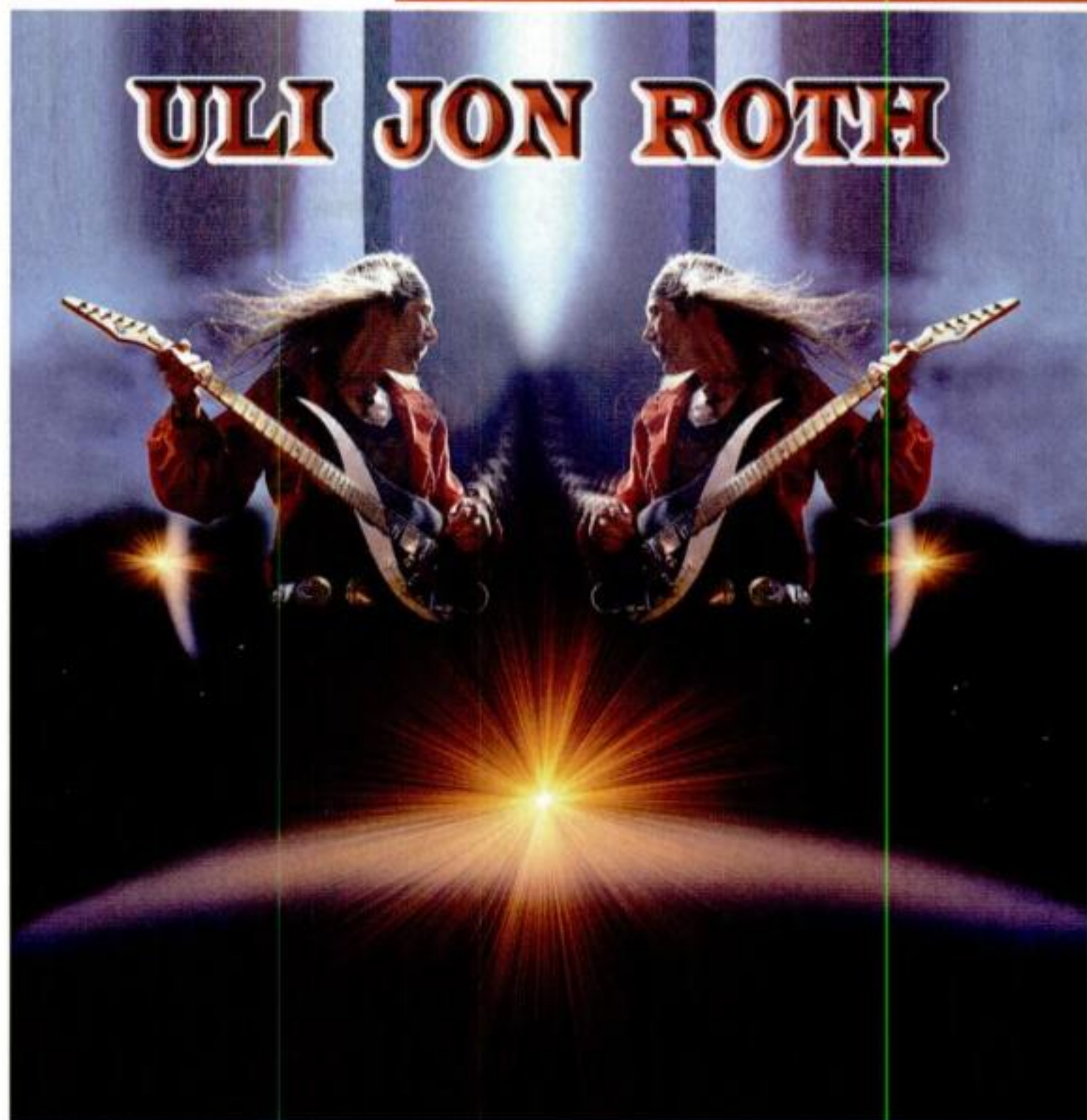
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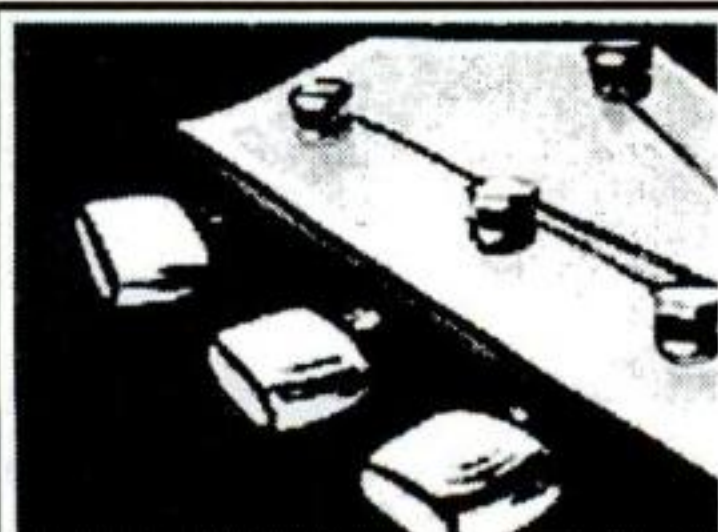
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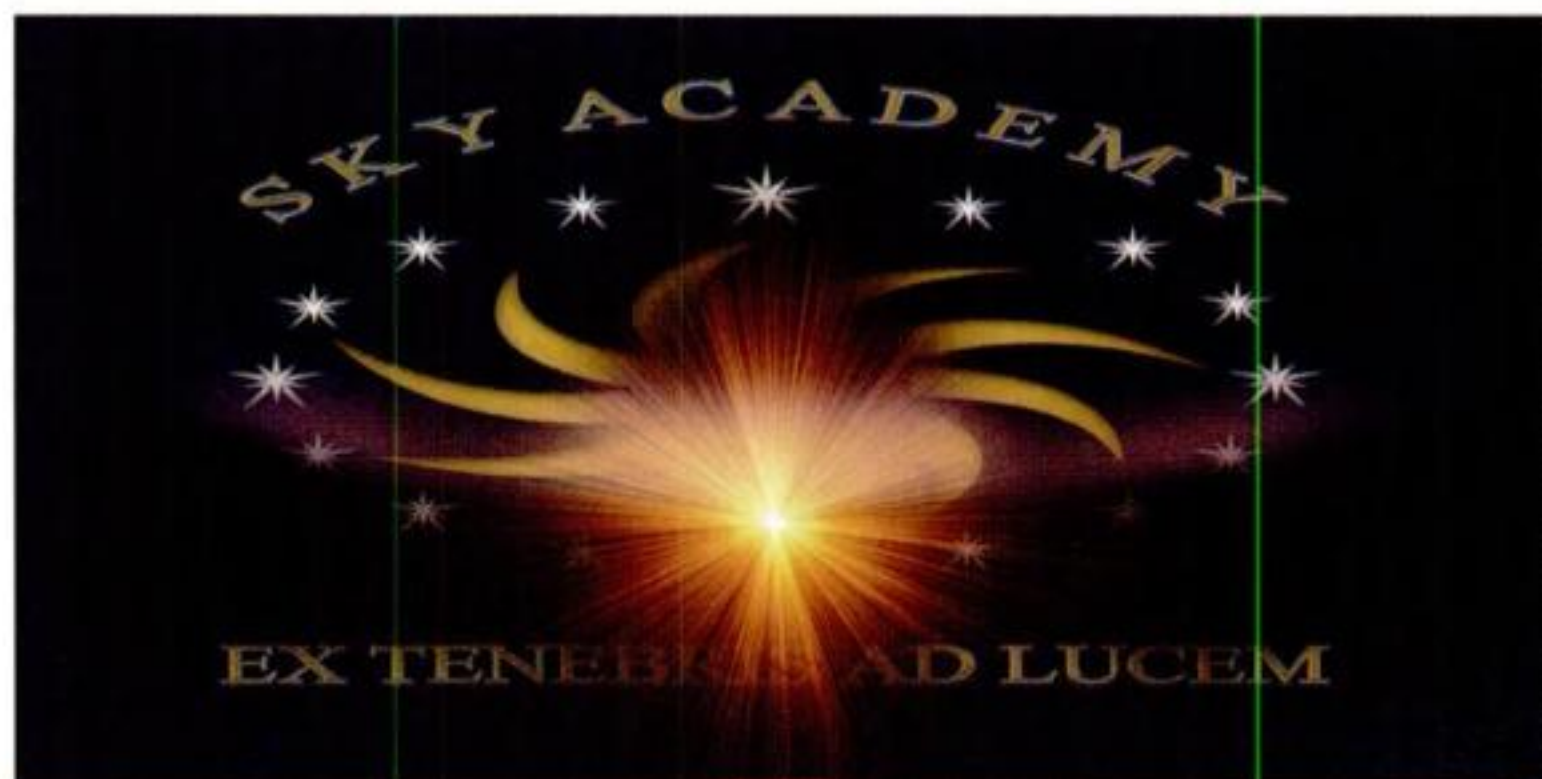
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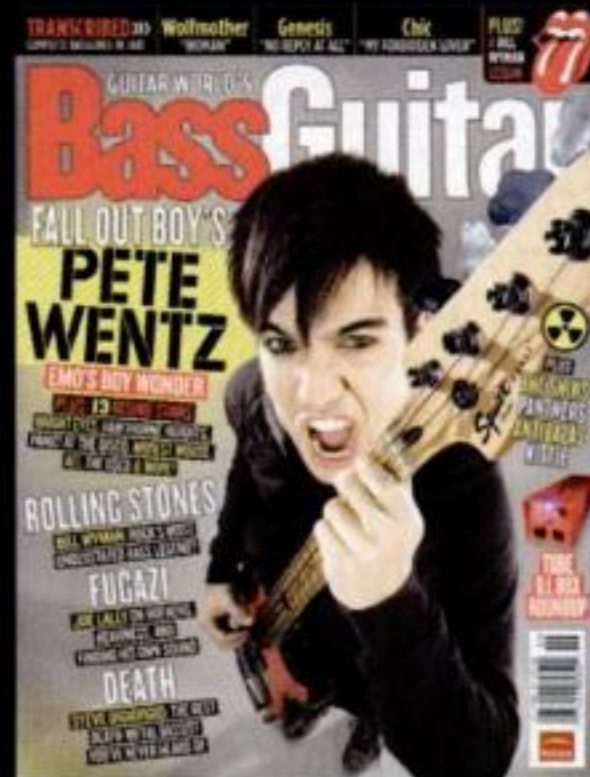
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CAPTAIN CRUNCH

Marshall JVM410 head



BY ERIC KIRKLAND



MARSHALL JVM410
HEAD & 2x12 COMBO

LIST PRICES: Head, \$2,500.00; JVM410C 2x12 combo, \$3,000.00

MANUFACTURER: Marshall Amplification PLC, marshallamps.com

TYPE: All-tube four-channel amp with solid-state rectification

OUTPUT: 100 watts RMS

TUBE COMPLEMENT: Five ECC83/12AX7 pre-amp, Four EL34 power

CHANNELS: Four, each with three voicing modes

CONTROLS: (Each channel) Gain, Bass, Mid, Treble, Volume, Mode switch, Reverb level; two Master Volume; Presence and Resonance

FEATURES: MIDI In/Thru, series effect loop with bypass, parallel effect loop with instrument/line level switch and mix controls, balanced speaker-emulated line out (operates in standby mode for silent recording), digital reverb

SPEAKERS: (JVM410C combo only) one Celestion Vintage and one Celestion Heritage

FOOTSWITCH: Six-button (included)

User-programmable footswitch uses a single 1/4-inch cable for operation.

JIM MARSHALL crafted the first modern “crunch” sound in response to appeals from Pete Townshend, Eric Clapton and other guitarists.

Thus began Marshall’s long-standing tradition of developing products that meet the needs of its customers. In just the past few years, this practice led the company to create the Handwired Series for vintage-tone enthusiasts, reinvigorate shred tones with its JCM800 reissue and beguile Hendrix fans with a hyperaccurate recreation of the guitarist’s legendary stack.

Marshall’s most recent tone requests came from modern guitar warriors who need an amp with historic crunch tones, brick-melting gain and features designed around playing live. The new Marshall flagship JVM410 is specifically built for these players, with 100 watts of tube power, one channel of glorious vintage Marshall tones, one channel of “Plexi”- and JCM800-style crunch, and two channels of the most heinous high-gain profanity imaginable. Digital reverb complements each channel, and a programmable footswitch puts all the amp’s features at your command.

FEATURES

MARSHALL FANS ARE accustomed to working with a simple user interface, and in this regard, the JVM satisfies. Although the amp has 28 knobs and multiple switches on its gold brushed-metal front panel, the logical layout makes the JVM exceedingly simple to operate. You can think of the controls as divided among three sections: channel, reverb and master.

The JVM sports four channels—Clean, Crunch, OD1, OD2—each with three modes and a complement of controls for gain, volume, middle, treble and bass. A pushbutton next to each channel serves dual purposes: depressing the button the first time selects the channel, while each successive push

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changes the channel's mode. As each mode is selected, the button's accompanying LED changes from green to amber to red; green indicates the lowest gain setting and red the highest.

Traditional spring reverb tanks generally don't mate well with high-gain signals, so the JVM features studio-quality digital reverb with separate reverb controls for each channel. Not only is the reverb tuned and tailored for Marshall's brilliant crunch but it's also essentially noise free and doesn't interfere with the attack or tone of the amp.

The JVM's backside features include a series loop with a bypass switch, a switchable series/parallel effect loop with level and mix controls (bypassed or activated with the front panel switch), MIDI In and MIDI Thru jacks, a line out with a speaker emulator and multiple speaker outputs.

PERFORMANCE

I TESTED THE JVM atop a custom 4x12 loaded with Eminence Man-O-War speakers. My fun began with the Clean channel's Green mode, which does not



Each channel has a mode switch with three gain settings.



The individual reverb controls are clustered together in the same orientation as the corresponding channel controls.

Outside of the JVM's fancy preamp, this ferocious Marshall owes its definition, focus and sheer volume to a well-designed power amp. Marshall states that the JVM's four EL34 power tubes put out 100 watts. However, its huge bass response and high headroom suggest a power rating closer to 150 watts.

Situated in the master section, the resonance and presence controls govern the levels of low and high frequencies, respectively. The JVM has two master volume controls, each of which can be assigned to any channel, though they cannot be used together in series. Dual master controls offer all sorts of advantages, but I see most players using them to set up switchable rhythm and solo levels.

To that end, the included six-button footswitch is ideal. The unit is programmable, and each button can be configured to select any of the Marshall's four channels or to function like any of the amp's front panel switches. As you switch from one channel to another, the JVM automatically recalls each channel's last selected mode, master control, reverb activation and effect loop status.

use channel volume; only the gain and master volume are active, replicating the shorter signal path of a vintage Marshall. The modes in this channel also place the tone stack before the gain stages, which allows the tone controls to heavily affect which frequency levels drive the gain.

Even though the Clean channel's Green mode doesn't have a lot of distortion available, its tone and feel made it one of my favorites. It was bright and furry, with a hollow low end and a crisp attack. If you're going to do a Malmsteen impression, this is where you want to start. The Clean channel's Orange and Red modes offered far more gain and compression, much like the sound of a vintage Marshall with a distortion box.

The Crunch channel's Green mode did a fine job of replicating a 1959 "Plexi"'s moderate gain and delightful upper harmonics, although I ultimately preferred the Clean channel's performance for vintage Marshall sounds. Switching into the Crunch channel's Orange mode began my journey into the tones of

The JVM410C combo features Celestion Vintage and Heritage speakers.

the mighty JCM800 2203. I compared it to my own 800 and found its combination of vicious distortion and clarity to be remarkably similar. The Red mode upped the gain, similar to driving a JCM800 with an overdrive.

Both of the OD channels are based on radically modified versions of the JCM800, the main difference being the shape of their midrange envelopes. OD1 offers more accentuated mids for tight shredding runs, and OD2 drops the mids a bit for players that want absolutely sick über-metal gain. I could spend hours raving about the phenomenal high-gain tones from both of these channels, but it's easiest to say that OD1 and OD2 offer the hottest, most aggressive and wickedly refined high-gain sounds that have ever screamed from a stock Marshall. The digital reverb matched beautifully to the Marshall's tones and offered a wide range of echo levels.

THE BOTTOM LINE

MARSHALL'S ALL-TUBE JVM410 houses a virtual encyclopedia of Marshall's finest stock and modified rock tones, including stout "Plexi" power, stock JCM800 crunch and modified JCM800 high-gain insanity. It's the ultimate rocker's Marshall and may be the most significant Marshall amp since the JCM800. 🌟

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SOUNDCHECK *the gear in review*

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Victoria Regal II combo

BY ERIC KIRKLAND

BETWEEN THE years of 1942 and 1968, Valco was one of America's largest amplifier manufacturers. In addition to making amps for Gretsch and Oahu, the company built amps that were sold under the Supro name. Valco amps, though little known outside collector's circles, are considered by many to be among the best-sounding vintage amps and, not surprisingly, are highly collectible.

Mark Baier, president of the Victoria Amplifier Company, aims to rekindle the Valco fire with his new Regal II amp. But don't think that the Regal II is simply a Valco copy: Baier's design brings modern utility to this classic foundation to make it an ideal choice for tube-swapping tone hounds.

FEATURES

THE REGAL II looks as classic as it sounds, with blond Tolex on its trap-ezoidal pine cabinet and oxblood grille



VICTORIA REGAL II COMBO

LIST PRICE: \$2,795.00

MANUFACTURER: Victoria Amplifier Co., victoriaamp.com

TYPE: Single-ended Class A design

OUTPUT: 5 to 35 watts

TUBE COMPLEMENT:

One 5U4GB rectifier, Two 5881 power, Three 12AX7 preamp, One 12AT7 reverb driver

CHANNELS: One

FOOTSWITCH: Two-button for reverb and tremolo (included)

CONTROLS: Volume, Treble, Bass, Reverb, Speed, Intensity

SPEAKER: Weber VST Alnico 15-inch

cloth. The speaker is a 15-inch Alnico Classic driver custom built for Victoria by Weber.

Although some of the Regal II is based on a Valco blueprint, Baier designed a very special power section for the amp. It's a single-ended Class A design, which usually means that there's only one power tube. However, Baier made it possible for this amp to use two power tubes without giving up any of the purity for which single-ended amps are prized. The Regal II is also self-biasing. This means players can insert practically any power tube in the Regal, mix power tubes or run the amp with just one tube. Depending on the chosen tubes, the Regal II's output can vary from five to 35 watts.

The Victoria's tone isn't just a credit to its layout; Baier painstakingly selects the components and uses custom-made parts, such as real Allen Bradley carbon-composition resistors and 22-gauge cloth-covered solid copper wire. The Regal also features Baier's award-winning reverb and tremolo units. Controls on the top panel include volume, treble, bass, reverb, tremolo intensity and tremolo speed.

PERFORMANCE

I TESTED THE Regal II with a Fender Relic Strat, a Malmsteen signature Strat and a Les Paul Custom. The amp came loaded with two 5881 Tung-Sol power tubes, three 12AX7s, a single 12AT7 and a 5U4GB rectifier tube. For the sake of design and circuit comparisons, I often A/B'd the Regal II with a Victoria Victorilux running on the same tube complement.

The first thing that struck me about the Regal II's tone was its bell-like clarity and spacious presentation. Even without reverb added, notes rang like choir voices soaring through a cathedral. The same notes played through the Victorilux had a much softer focus and somewhat warmer tone. The Regal II also has the rare ability to resolve microscopic details in the tone, which

is one of the characteristics that draw experienced players to boutique amp manufacturers like Victoria. That said, younger players can really benefit from an amp like the Regal II, as well, since the ability to hear so many aspects of the sound makes it easier to discover and craft a personal voice.

Stage players sometimes avoid Class A designs because they are notoriously lacking in headroom and bass response. The Regal II's inherent clarity helped it to avoid these pitfalls and deliver up to 35 watts of loud and clean tone. Bass notes, especially, were not just authoritative but gorgeously clear and never lacked headroom.

Of course, depending on the tube choice, any volume setting above five will start to push the amp into overdrive. Unlike some other Class A amps, the Regal has a natural tendency toward even-order harmonics, which keeps the amp's definition clean and clear. When I pushed the Victorilux to the same break-up level, its sound was thick and juicy but could not match the Regal II for definition and transparency.

To explore the limits of the Regal II's overbuilt transformer and speaker, I juiced the front end with a Klon Centaur overdrive. Even with my Les Paul's rather dark humbuckers and loads of Centaur-supplied drive, the Regal's sugary distortion still didn't interfere with the amp's resolution or low-end control. The reverb and tremolo sat well in the mix, allowing for subtle or extreme ambient texture enhancements.

THE BOTTOM LINE

IN TERMS OF overall purity of sound and musical depth, the Regal II is Victoria's most exciting amplifier. Its audiophile-approved clarity and detailed response exist in a perfect ratio, creating an unequaled playing experience. Best of all, the Regal II's versatile power amp will automatically bias and accept practically any power tubes in any combination, making it possible to infinitely personalize the essence of the amp's tone.



The Regal II features a 15-inch Weber VST Alnico speaker.



PRO	CON
DIFFERENT POWER TUBES CAN BE USED WITHOUT THE NEED TO BIAS; REMARKABLE TRANSPARENCY, RESPONSE AND FEEL	NO MIDRANGE CONTROL ON THE PANEL

WORKHORSE™ INNOVATION #1: **THE HUBCAP**

“What’s up with that Hubcap speaker grill?”

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SOUNDCHECK *the gear in review*

RED ROCKS MXR Distortion III pedal

BY CHRIS GILL

RELEASED IN THE early Eighties around the same time as the film *Psycho II*, the MXR Distortion II pedal was, like that movie, a decent but unmemorable take on its predecessor. This year, MXR released a long overdue follow-up: the MXR Distortion III. But unlike the crap coming out of Hollywood these days, this sequel is a worthy improvement over its predecessor.

The MXR Distortion III fills the void between most overdrive and distortion pedals. More aggressive than the average overdrive stomp box but more lively and natural sounding than most distortion pedals, the Distortion III is just the ticket if you want to get a hotter sound from your amp while preserving your guitar's character and personality.

FEATURES

THE DISTORTION III is housed in the same variety of die-cast aluminum case that accommodated its granddaddy, the Distortion +, but it boasts a chili pepper-red paint job that proudly proclaims this is one hot box. Like today's MXR stomp boxes, the pedal includes a bright red LED to let you



MXR DISTORTION III
PEDAL

LIST PRICE: \$129.99
MANUFACTURER:
Dunlop Manufacturing,
jimdunlop.com



know when the effect is engaged and an AC adapter jack for an optional nine-volt power supply. The heavy-duty footswitch is built to withstand constant abuse by a 325-pound jack-booted brute, and a true-bypass circuit keeps your signal strong and clean when the effect is disengaged.

Three controls—output, tone and distortion—provide enough tonal flexibility to dial in the amount of boost, midrange and overdrive power you need without detrimentally affecting your guitar's natural tone.

PERFORMANCE

UNLIKE MOST distortion pedals, the Distortion III does not compress your tone but instead delivers the dynamic, touch-responsive performance of a good overdrive unit. Its tone is similar to the distortion you get when you push power tubes to the limit, with rich harmonics and tight, satisfying low-end crunch. With the output control set past 12 o'clock, it can boost your signal significantly—perfect for breathing new life into an anemic amp or blasting your solos into the stratosphere. The tone control works especially well with Strats and Teles, providing hefty midrange

ON
DISC

punch to complement a single-coil pickup's natural treble cut.

THE BOTTOM LINE

IF YOU LOVE the sound of your rig but wish your guitar was louder and your amp hotter, the Distortion III will make your tone more brawny and aggressive with just a stomp of your foot. *

PRO	CON
DYNAMIC AND HARMONICALLY RICH TONE, EXCEPTIONAL BOOST, REASONABLE PRICE	NONE

BUZZ BIN NEW, HIP AND UNDER THE RADAR

SHOW BIZ

Display and Play Metalhead guitar display

GUITAR COLLECTORS view the instruments they own as objects of art, tributes to their favorite players or sentimental icons of their youth. Now that collecting is more popular than ever, demand for personalized and novel ways to display guitars has increased dramatically. Display and Play Co. have arrived to fill the void with stylish display cases that are quickly becoming the industry standard, with styles and color combinations

to suit practically every taste.

I looked at Display and Play's Metalhead case, the style of which is suited to a hardcore ax. The Metalhead's industrial metal vibe is supplied via diamond-plate steel applied over sturdy 3/4-inch pine. Inside the case, premium black velvet and a padded backing protect the guitar's finish, and a String Swing hanger safely suspends the instrument. The door is made of museum-

quality cast acrylic, and the case is covered against manufacturing defects by a lifetime warranty. Mount the Display and Play Metalhead on any wall and transform your home or band room into a true guitar armory. —Eric Kirkland *

DISPLAY AND PLAY
METALHEAD GUITAR

LIST PRICE: \$999.99
MANUFACTURER:
Display and Play
Case Company,
displayandplay.com



PLAYING THE MARKET WILD, WILD WOOD

CONFESSIONS
OF A VINTAGE
GEAR WHORE

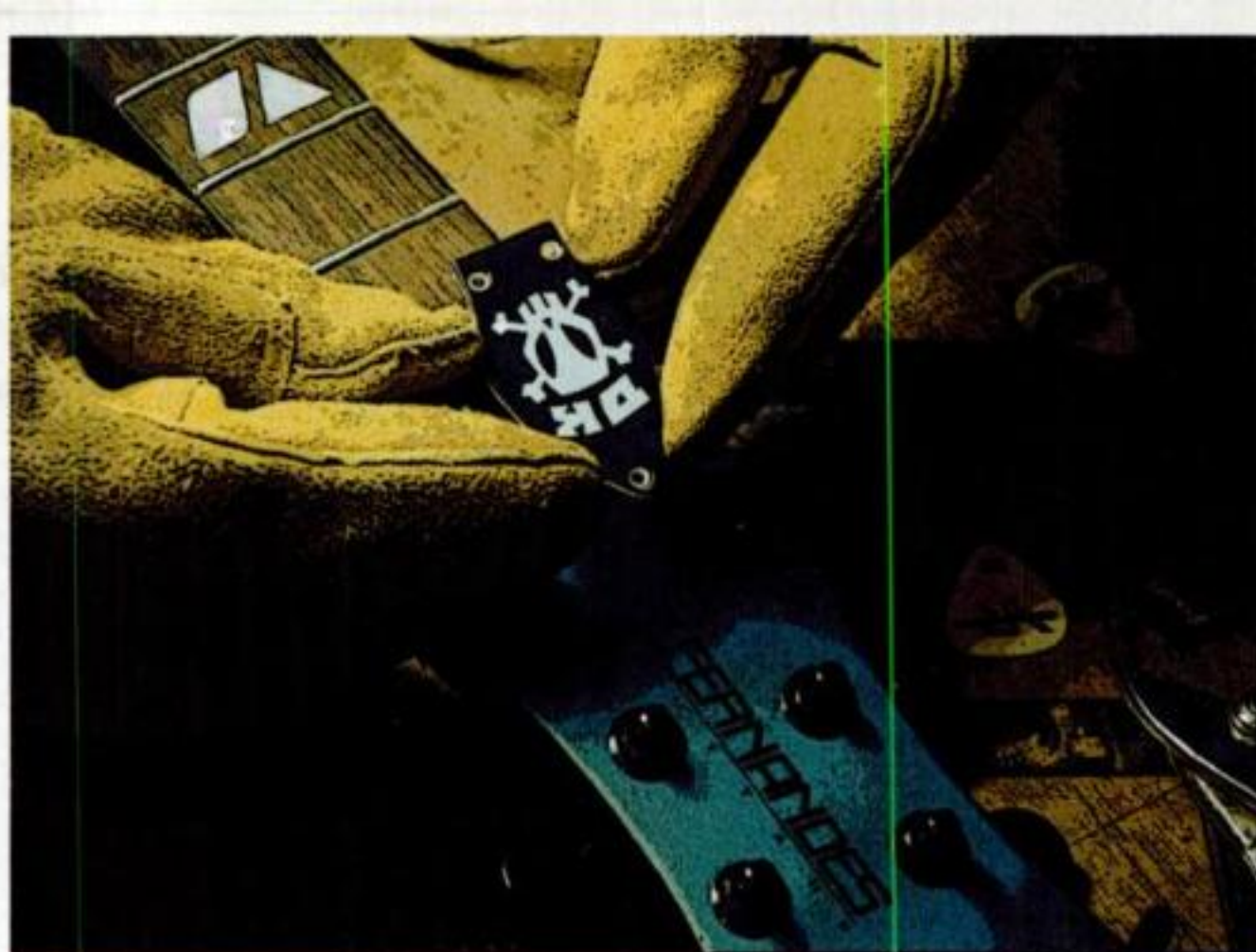


In 1966, in an attempt to compete with Gibson's popular ES guitar range, Fender introduced the Coronado series of double-cutaway thinline electric guitars (as well as a couple of basses) designed by Roger Rossmeisl. Each had a beechwood body, a maple neck and a rosewood fretboard. The Coronado I was equipped with a single neck-position DeArmond pickup, while the Coronado II came with a pair of DeArmonds; either guitar could be ordered as a six- or 12-string model. Like Gibson's ES-330, the Coronado was fully hollow, but unlike any Gibson, the Coronado had a bolt-on neck.

The earliest Coronados came standard in cherry red and sunburst finishes, but in 1966 Fender started using a finish it called "Wildwood," based on a Danish technology that involved dye-injected wood, bringing out a psychedelic grain pattern in colors such as green, gold and purple, and purple and blue.

Despite their flashiness, Coronados were not well received and were discontinued in 1970. Still, the Coronado is a super-cool guitar—lightweight and with a distinctive hollowbody tone—which will cost a fraction of the price of an old Gibson. At press time, a 1966 Coronado was spotted on the web for \$1,200; a 1967 Coronado II, for \$1,800.

The difference between a minty example and one in good condition will be only a few hundred dollars, so go for the minty one. The Coronado may yet prove to be a hot collector's item, in which case the price difference between the two pieces would end up being much wider. —Curly Maple



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 and your choice of Seymour
 Duncan Custom Custom or
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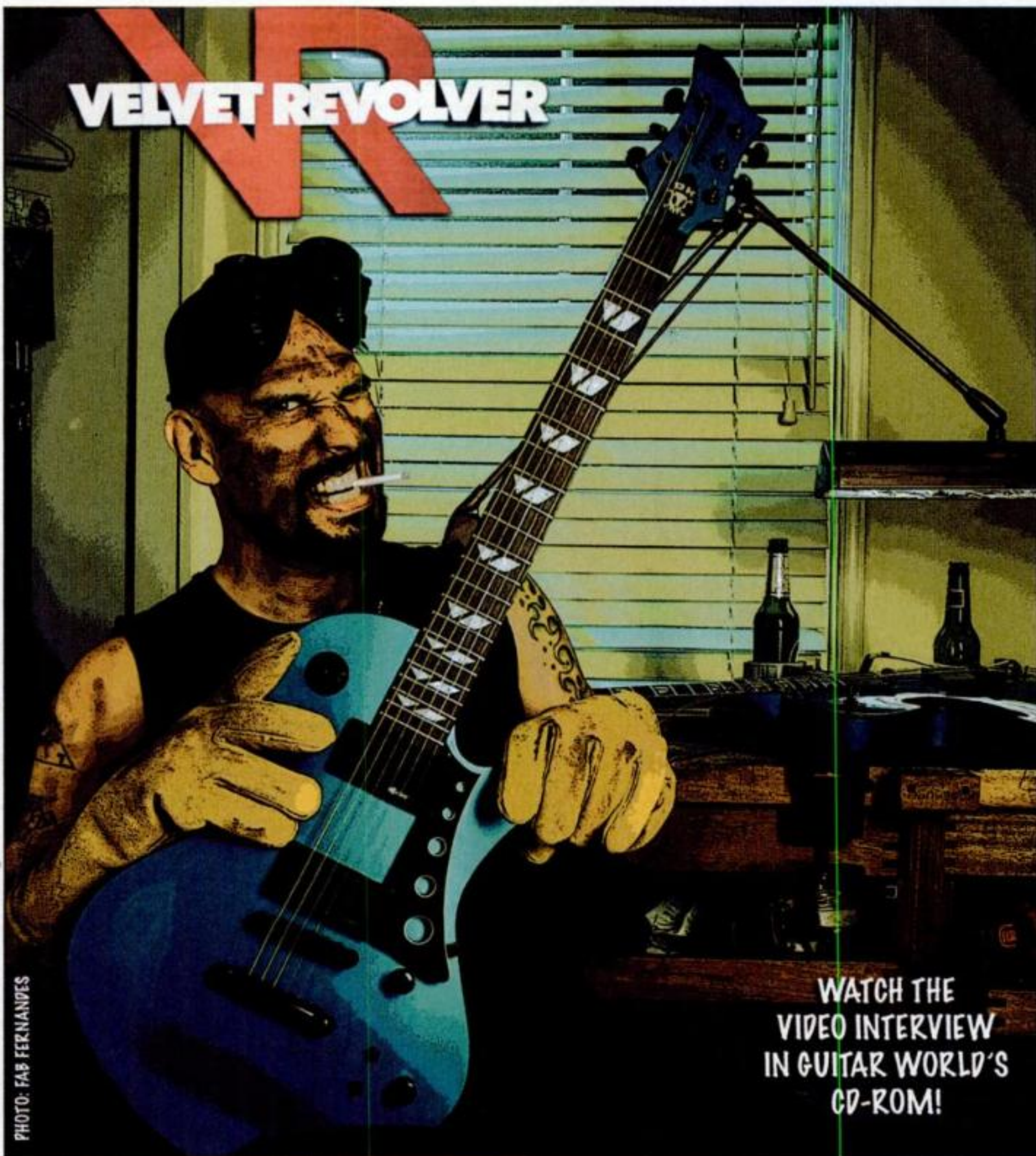


PHOTO: FAB FERNANDES

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SFX-05 Lava Box

The Seymour Duncan SFX-05 Lava Box behaves more like an amp than a stomp box with its broad array of midrange timbres and sensitivity to picking intensity and volume changes. The Lava Box has a six-position "Rumble" bass roll-off control that changes the pedal's sonic character from bright and crisp to deep and warm. When playing at high-gain settings, simply turn down your guitar's volume control and the Lava Box cleans up your sound.

List Price: \$149.00

Seymour Duncan, seymourduncan.com



Ovation

VXT Hybrid guitar

The Ovation VXT Hybrid guitar is designed for players who need classic electric and acoustic guitar sounds in one instrument. The VXT allows panning from acoustic fingerstyle sounds to hard-driving power chords with just a turn of the knob, and electric and acoustic tones can be blended to create new hybrid tones. The VXT has two Seymour Duncan '59 humbucking pickups for electric power, a Fishman Power Bridge for true acoustic attack without piezo distortion, and Ovation's VIP virtual microphone imaging preamp, a new technology that produces natural, studio-quality acoustic sound. The chambered mahogany body and solid spruce top create rich depth for both the electric and the acoustic modes, without a trace of feedback, even at high stage volumes.

List Price: \$2,499.00

Ovation, thevxt.com



Coffin Case

Scarface Picks

The Scarface six-pick package features picks with quotes and high-resolution images from the 1983 Al Pacino movie. Offerings include a pick with the phrase "I ain't no cock-a-roach" on one side and the Scarface logo on the other. The picks are available in medium and heavy gauges and are made of high-quality celluloid composite. This collector's series is available for a limited time from select retailers.

List Price: \$5.95

Coffin Case, coffincase.com

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SOUNDCHECK *the gear in review*

BACK IN MAC

Gibson Les Paul Classic Custom electric guitar

ON
DISC

BY CHRIS GILL

AN ORIGINAL Gibson Les Paul Custom "Black Beauty" is the guitar equivalent of a Steinway Concert Grand Model D piano: a timeless classic that sounds as impressive as it looks. With its black finish, gold hardware, and ivory binding, the Les Paul Custom looks sophisticated, like a guitar dressed up in an Armani tuxedo, but it's also rough and ready to rock.

Original Les Paul Customs from the Fifties and early Sixties sell for a mint these days, and even reissues from the Seventies and later fetch prices that are beyond the reach of the average working musician. Gibson's new Les Paul Classic Custom is a good alternative for guitarists who desire the look and vibe of the original "Black Beauty" but want a player's instrument that is more ideal for today's playing styles than the "fretless wonder" models of yesteryear. While the Les Paul Classic Custom isn't exactly cheap (its list price is almost four grand), its excellent tone and superior playability make it a good alternative to a vintage ax.

FEATURES

ALTHOUGH this Les Paul model bears the "Custom" moniker, it is more like a hybrid of several classic Gibson solid-bodies, including the SG Standard, Les Paul Standard and Les Paul Custom. The main deviation from the Custom paradigm is the Classic Custom's neck, which features pearloid trapezoid fingerboard inlays, hefty-feeling medium frets and the slim, fast Sixties-style taper of a Les Paul Standard. Also, instead of a split-diamond peghead inlay, the Classic Custom features the crown-shaped headstock inlay usually found on the SG Standard and other Gibson models. However, as on the Custom, the headstock is bound and the smooth-feeling fretboard is crafted from a slab of jet-black ebony.

One other significant difference is concealed beneath the Antique Ebony finish: instead of the carved mahogany top found on an original LP Custom, the Classic Custom boasts a carved maple top that provides the lively dynamic tone of an LP Standard rather than the mellower demeanor of a Custom.

Beyond that, the features are strictly Custom, from the black speed knobs to the gold-plated hardware. The top of the body is bound with single-layer

binding that replicates the look of the multiple-layer binding found on an original LP Custom. Furthermore, the binding and the pickup switch tip are "pre-aged" to an orange-yellow hue that you'll either love or hate. Around the office, we thought the color resembled the color of Kraft Mac n' Cheese and wondered how the color would mutate 50 years from now, when the guitar has aged properly.

PERFORMANCE

THE '57 Classic neck and '57 Classic Plus bridge pickups feature distinctive gold-plated pole pieces and are installed without covers to enhance the LP Classic Custom's brightness and responsiveness. Possessing an output that's slightly hotter than that of a typical PAF humbucker, the '57 Classic Plus pickup delivers punchy midrange and impressive bass and treble detail. It's aggressive enough to push an amp into overdrive when you bear into the strings, but notes retain definition and clarity when the guitar is mainlined to a high-gain screamer. The neck pickup provides a warmer, mellower tone, but it can also howl with all the bite and wallop that humbucker lovers demand.

My test guitar felt and played like some of the better vintage Les Pauls I've played over the years. The frets have a slightly squared-off profile that provides just the right amount of resistance while retaining a smooth, slinky feel as you play up and down the neck. The frets feel meaty and substantial, and when I bent notes, I encountered absolutely no buzzing or rattles—just sweet, singing sustain and big-ass tone. Thanks to the timeless Tune-O-Matic bridge and meticulous fretwork, my test guitar's intonation was dead-on perfect.

THE BOTTOM LINE

WHILE THE Gibson Les Paul Classic Custom sounds and plays more like an LP Standard and only slightly resembles an LP Custom cosmetically, I fully agree with the Classic designation. This guitar brings together the best features of several Les Paul and SG models that we love, to provide players with a timeless instrument that will never go out of style. 🌟

PRO	CON
AGGRESSIVE CLASSIC LES PAUL TONE, OUTSTANDING PLAYABILITY	EXPENSIVE, PRE-AGED BINDING LOOKS UNNATURAL



GIBSON LES PAUL
CLASSIC CUSTOM

LIST PRICE: \$3,999.00

MANUFACTURER:

Gibson USA,
gibson.com

BODY: Mahogany with
carved maple top

NECK: Mahogany
set neck

FINGERBOARD:
Ebony with pearloid
trapezoid inlays

SCALE LENGTH:
24 inches

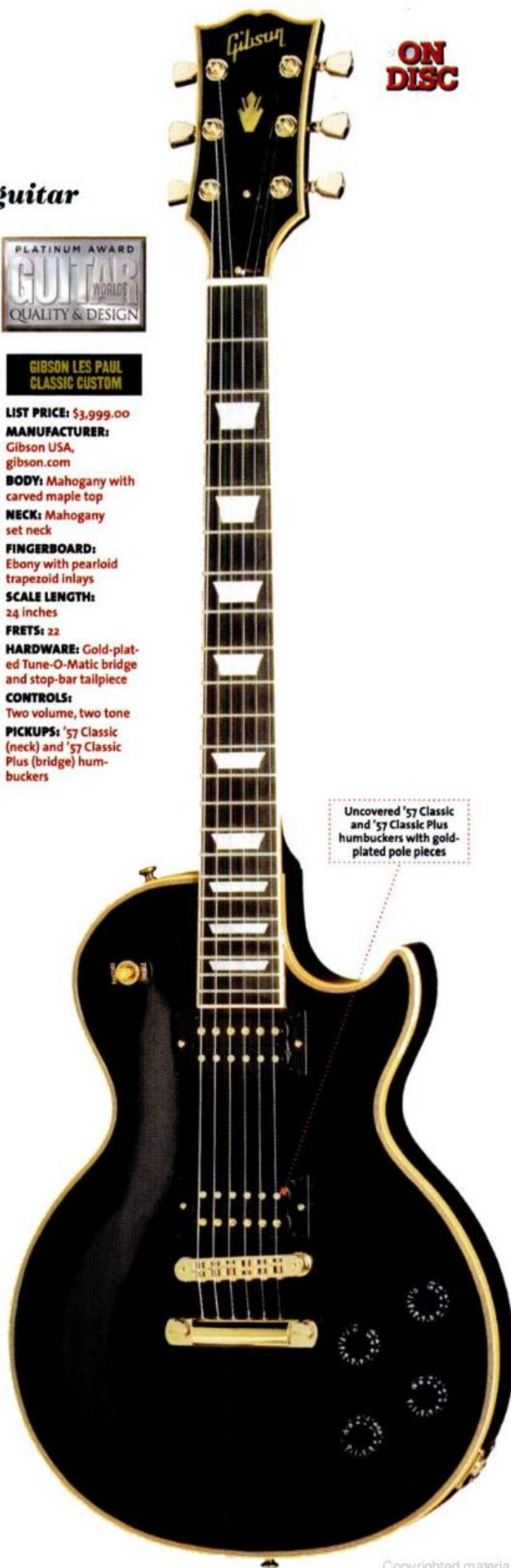
FRETS: 22

HARDWARE: Gold-plat-
ed Tune-O-Matic bridge
and stop-bar tailpiece

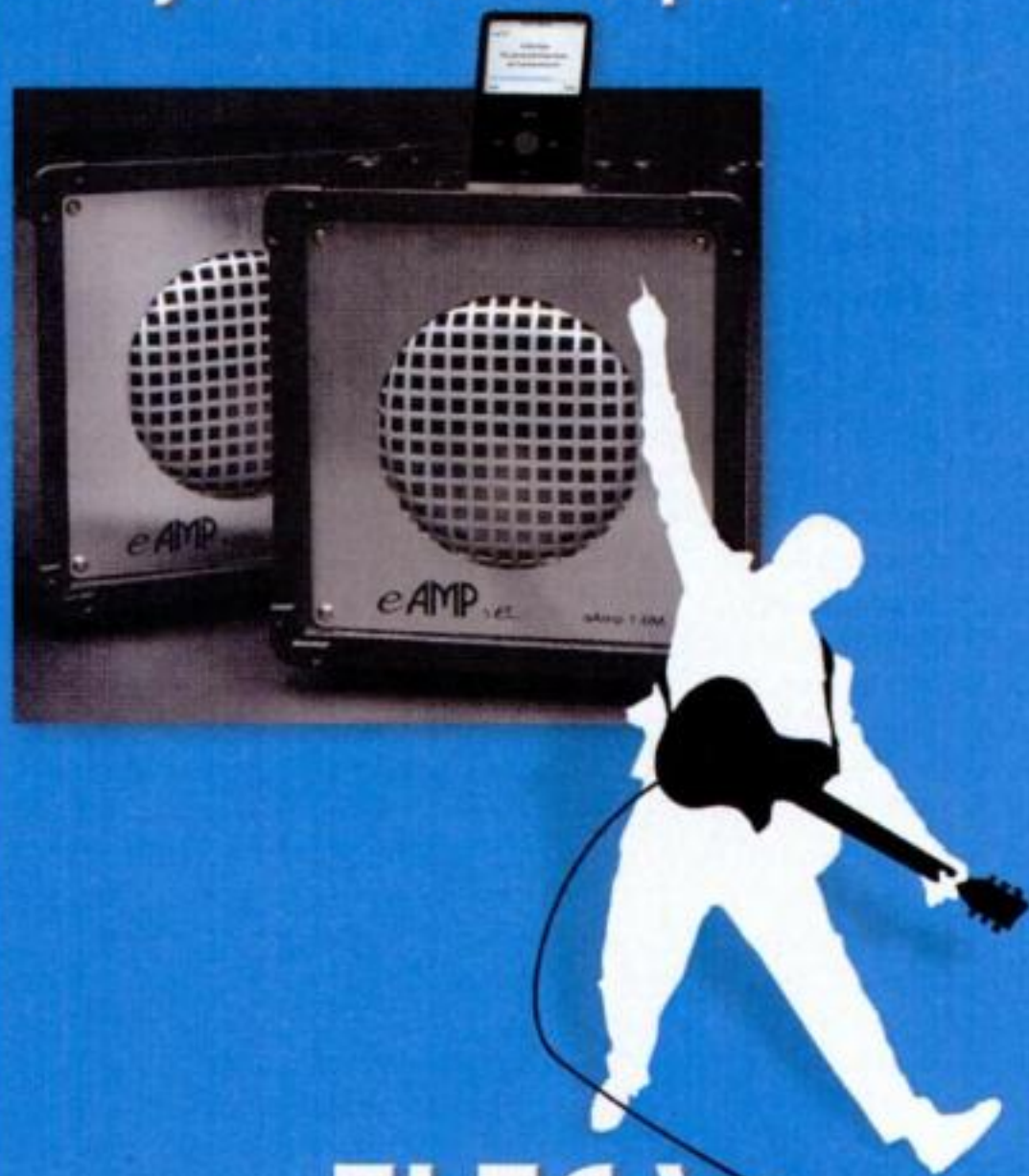
CONTROLS:
Two volume, two tone

PICKUPS: '57 Classic
(neck) and '57 Classic
Plus (bridge) hum-
buckers

Uncovered '57 Classic
and '57 Classic Plus
humbuckers with gold-
plated pole pieces



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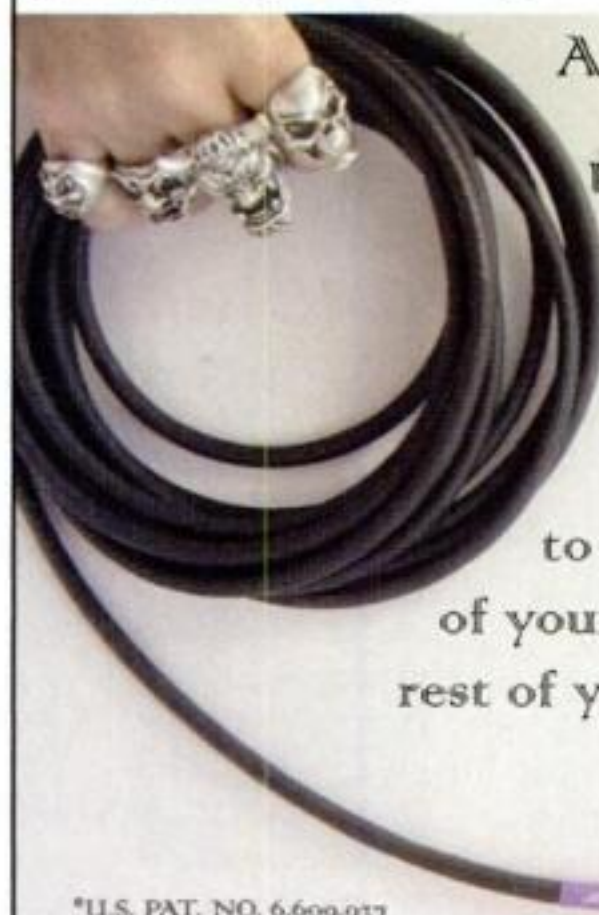
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THE HOLE TRUTH *acoustic gear in review*

ON
DISC

RED BIRCH SOCIETY

Martin OMC Red Birch Sustainable Wood Series
acoustic-electric guitar

BY EMILE MENASCHE

IT'S BEEN AN underlying worry for years: the tone woods commonly used for guitars are becoming increasingly rare, and the regions in which they are grown are being affected by environmental change. Guitar makers have found ways around this problem that include using artificial materials and laminates—popular methods that have their adherents.

C.F. Martin is taking a slightly different approach with its Sustainable Wood Series, which features guitars built of atypical tone woods harvested in an ecologically responsible manner. The OMC Red Birch acoustic-electric is one such guitar and the object of this month's review.

FEATURES

THE SINGLE-CUTAWAY OMC Red Birch model is a visual jewel, both elegant and understated in design. The back and sides are made of solid, sustainable red birch, with a solid cherry center wedge on the back. Despite its name, the Red Birch is honey blond and looks a bit like a maple guitar. The darker cherry looks warm against it. The "rescued" solid sitka spruce top is accented by a cream-and-black-grained ivoroid binding and a cherry rosette that is decorated, appropriately enough, with little leafy icon inlays of red birch. The bracing is also made of rescued sitka spruce.

The neck, made of sustainable cherry, joins the body at the 14th fret and is capped by a sustainable wood called katalox, which has roughly the color and grain of rosewood. The 20-fret fingerboard has a 25 1/2-inch scale length, with 14 frets clear of the body; the cut-away provides reasonable access to the upper reaches. The headstock sports a red birch cap with a gold foil logo.

For amplification, the Red Birch sports an onboard Fishman Ellipse Aura preamp that blends the sound of the bridge-mounted piezo with digitally modeled images of "miked" guitar sounds.

The controls are mounted in the soundhole, a position that allows easy access during performance and preserves the body's integrity. Controls include sliders for volume and for piezo/image blend, a four-way "image"



MARTIN OMC RED BIRCH SUSTAINABLE WOOD SERIES ACOUSTIC-ELECTRIC GUITAR

LIST PRICE: \$2,999.00

CONTACT: C.F. Martin & Co., martinguitar.com

BODY: Rescued solid sitka spruce top with solid sustainable red birch sides, solid sustainable red birch wings with a solid sustainable cherry wedge back

ROSETTE: Sustainable cherry with red birch leaf pattern

NECK: Solid sustainable cherry

FINGERBOARD: Solid sustainable katalox

SCALE LENGTH: 25.4 inches

FRETS: 20

BRIDGE: Solid sustainable katalox

ELECTRONICS: Fishman Ellipse Aura

selector, a phase switch, a low-mid boost button and an automatic antifeed-back circuit that analyzes and notches out offending frequencies.

There's no EQ in the traditional sense, though the different images each lend the guitar another tonal character. The main disadvantage to the soundhole-mounted controls is that they can't be seen. Making adjustments takes practice, but considering the tonal advantages of an intact guitar body, I think the effort is worth it.

PERFORMANCE

THE NECK HAS a chunky shape (Martin calls it "C oval") that feels comfortable in the hand. Action on the test guitar was on the high side of low—not blazing fast but very playable—and string vibration was excellent. As you would expect from Martin,

workmanship was flawless: this looks and feels like a premium guitar.

And it sounds like one, too. As I read the literature on the Sustainable Wood Series prior to testing the guitar, I suspected the Red Birch would sound untraditional, given its use of alternative materials. I was a little shocked to discover that its tone was rich, room filling and distinctively Martin. A friend of mine has a special-issue Martin made of maple; the Red Birch's articulate highs remind me of that guitar, though it sounds a little warmer.

Interestingly, the Red Birch's tone changes markedly depending on playing technique. Attacked with fingers, it's among the mellower guitars I've played. It articulates the notes beautifully, but it has a truly warm lower midrange that's ideal for jazz. Go at it with a lot of nail or with a pick, and the Red Birch barks and sparkles, and sounds bigger than its OM body size. The tone is complex and shimmering. In fact, you could say that the Red Birch sounds the way it looks.

It sounds good plugged in, as well, though any preamp would have trouble capturing the full complexity of the guitar's tone as it unfolds in the room. My favorite setting was with 70/30 piezo/image blend on the first image setting; this seemed to capture the essence of the Martin's tone. The piezo sounds quite good on its own, too, so if you're interested in a more traditional "electric acoustic" tone, it's there for you. The boost button worked well, adding body without making the guitar too boomy.

THE BOTTOM LINE

MARTIN HAS BEEN working to develop renewable guitar materials for a long time, and judging by the Red Birch, the company has more than "replaced" traditional woods—it has found a combination that stands out in its own right. I'd recommend this guitar even without its environmental benefits. It's an outstanding instrument. ★



The Martin OMC Red Birch uses "rescued" wood for its solid sitka spruce top.

PRO	CON
GREAT SOUND, BEAUTIFUL LOOKS, NICE PLAYABILITY, ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, ADVANCED ELECTRONICS	CAN'T SEE SOUNDHOLE-MOUNTED CONTROLS

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Excellent

Features: ★★★★★ 10

Quality: ★★★★★ 10

Value: ★★★★★ 10

Overall: ★★★★★ 10

Mike Adams from Georgia

Experience: I own it

Background: 34 Years Musician

Style of Music: Rock, Alternative, Blues

Aug 16, 2005 - Excellent value! Priced very low in my opinion, if you consider how much guitar lessons can cost, and how many you would need to cover this material. You can never know too much, so this fills in alot of blanks with me and took me to the next level of playing.

This man not only sells you a product but stands behind it and will answer questions you may have with it! Very cool! If you are serious about guitar, then you must have this!!! It's not a witches brew that you drink to become a good guitar player. It is a serious learning aid/tool. Practice makes perfect but only if you are practicing the right way.

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★★★★★ **The Best There Is!**,
Reviewer: Spyder "Art Bushkin"
March 31, 2003 (Vienna, VA USA)
This series is the "must read" for all guitarists, regardless of how long you've been playing. It's a "guided treasure map" to the logic of the fretboard (no pun intended). Once you understand the patterns, your playing and your versatility will improve immediately. I have over 50 guitar books, and this series is the one to buy, if you're buying only one.



"After years of wishing I could play, I decided I'm serious this time. A friend recommended your book, but I never saw it at any of the stores I happened to be at. The other day while browsing at Guitar Center I settled on a new book when suddenly another customer walked up and said, "If your looking for a book you have to get this one." It was Fretboard Logic SE." He was buying his third copy for a friend of his, and I bought a copy too. After just a few days with the book I am thrilled by your method and cannot wait to practice every day. Great system, and what a great marketing staff - satisfied customers - what a concept!"

BARNES & NOBLE.com

A reviewer, September 27, 2005, ★★★★★

Best Guitar Book Ever

This book will give you a better understanding of the guitar quicker than any other book - the CAGED approach (unique to the guitar) will help you not just learn specific chords and scales but how to form chords/scales all along the fretboard in all keys, quickly. Your understanding of the guitar will likely be far ahead of your ability to play the guitar, but what a nice position to be in!

Also recommended: Fretboard Logic III is the next step and just as good.

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NONMASTER BLASTER

Tech Ed's Matt Bruck answers the call of a nonmaster volume freak who wants to keep his amp in check.

ON DISC



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IN THIS MONTH'S Tech Education CD-ROM video, I share my suggestions for building a guitar-specific tool kit. Having a well-stocked kit with you at rehearsal, in the studio, at a gig or on the road will keep you prepared to handle everything from broken strings to faulty wiring connections. Check out the video and make a kit that suits your specific purposes. It's easy, and it will save you from some serious trouble.

I've decided to buy my first 100-watt nonmaster volume amp head, but I want the tone of an amp cranked to 10, without creating earth-shattering volume or getting a visit from the cops. For years I've read about many different methods that can be used to achieve this: dummy loads, reamping, attenuators, post-phase-inverter master-volume mods, et cetera, each of which has a downside. Since I don't have the resources to try everything, I'd like to know your opinion of which approach will best preserve the amp's tone.

—Christian Kaluche
Normal, IL

I've always felt that guitarists who aren't playing arenas or stadiums (that would be most of us) have more amp than they can actually use. A nonmaster amp's sweet spot is found when the volume is at the halfway point, or higher; that's where it starts to produce the

the same sound at lower volume levels; it will be close but not as good as if you ran the amp wide open. I'm also not a fan of dummy loads, and I can't recommend reamping because I don't believe it is applicable in this scenario.

That leaves only power attenuators, which I do like. My favorite is the THD Hot Plate (thdelectronics.com). To my ears, it sounds best. With it, you can attenuate the overall sound, including the hard-driven power amp that is essential to getting the output distortion you want from a nonmaster. In addition, Marshall makes the Power Brake, and a host of smaller companies offer attenuators that insert between the speaker output of the amplifier and the speaker cabinet. These products preserve the tonal characteristics better than any other method I know of. As a last choice, and depending on how much power you need, don't rule out a 50-watt nonmaster amp. They're plenty loud too. Happy ear splitting!

How can I identify a reverse-wound single-coil pickup from a regular-wound pickup? I pulled out the single-coils from a Strat and replaced them with others. Now I want to go back and install the reverse-wound pickup in the center position to eliminate hum in positions 2 and 4, but I did not mark the old pickups. Is there a simple way to pick out the reverse-wound unit?

—John Russell
Cranbury, NJ

To answer your question, I enlisted the help of my good buddy Chip Ellis, of Fender Musical Instruments. Chip has a great method to determine a pickup's polarity, provided the pickups are not yet wired to anything. For this, you'll need an analog ohmmeter—that is, one that has a needle display. (A digital display won't work for this purpose.)

Set the ohmmeter to 1K. Hook one of your three pickups to the meter and tap its poles with a screwdriver. The needle should move left or right. (If there is no movement, change the ohmmeter setting to 10K.) Make a note of which direction the needle moves. Perform this check with the other two pickups and again note the direction of the needle's movement. You should find that one of the three pickups causes the

needle to move in the opposite direction of the other pickups. This is the reverse-wound pickup.

I have a brass-bodied resonator guitar, and while it's a whole pile of greasy fun the way it is, I've been toying with the idea of installing a humbucker in it. I've been swapping hardware in and out of guitars for 20 years, and I'm no stranger to a workbench, but this project is a little perplexing. Any suggestions for which pickup to use and where to place it?

—Robert Volenec
Elkhorn, NE



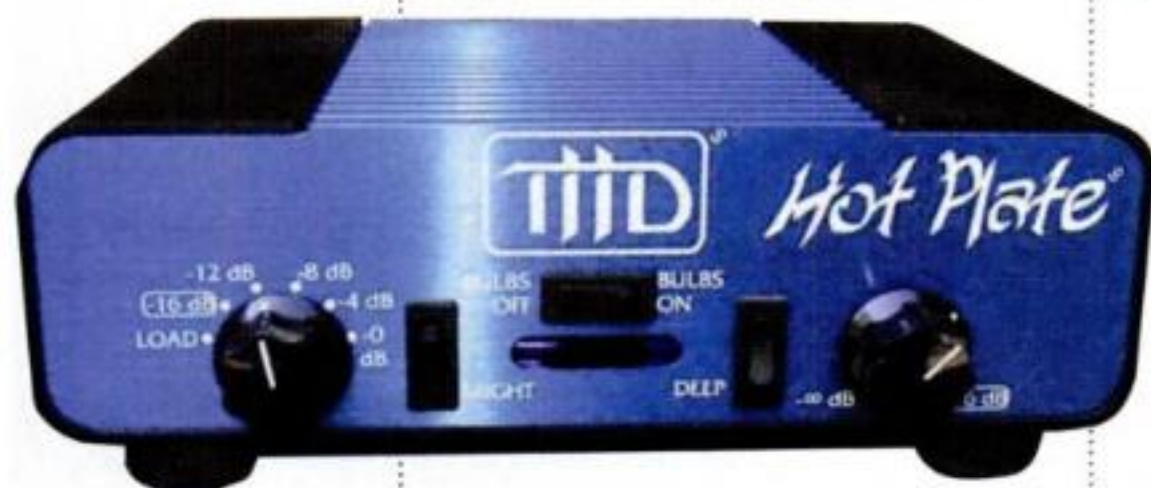
Without experimenting, it's hard to say what pickup will sound best in your resonator. The high frequencies produced by the brass and metal components will most likely create an overly bright sound once the guitar is amplified. The pickup's placement will also contribute to the character of the sound:

placing it close to the bridge will result in a brighter tone, while

setting it nearer to the neck will produce a darker sound. Under the circumstances, a neck-position humbucker might be a good way to go, since it will help darken the sound and roll off the high frequencies produced by all that metal.

You should also consider the sonic differences of high- and low-output pickups. A high-output pickup could sound downright greasy and dirty in a cool way. However, the intricacies of the resonator's tones will tend to be masked by the pickup's hotter output. A low-output pickup will reproduce the inherent sound of the resonator more faithfully, and with more detail.

Try a few different types of humbuckers to get a good overview of the tone possibilities. You can keep your costs low by shopping on eBay. Once you find the pickup you want, sell the others on eBay to recoup your costs. Best of luck. *



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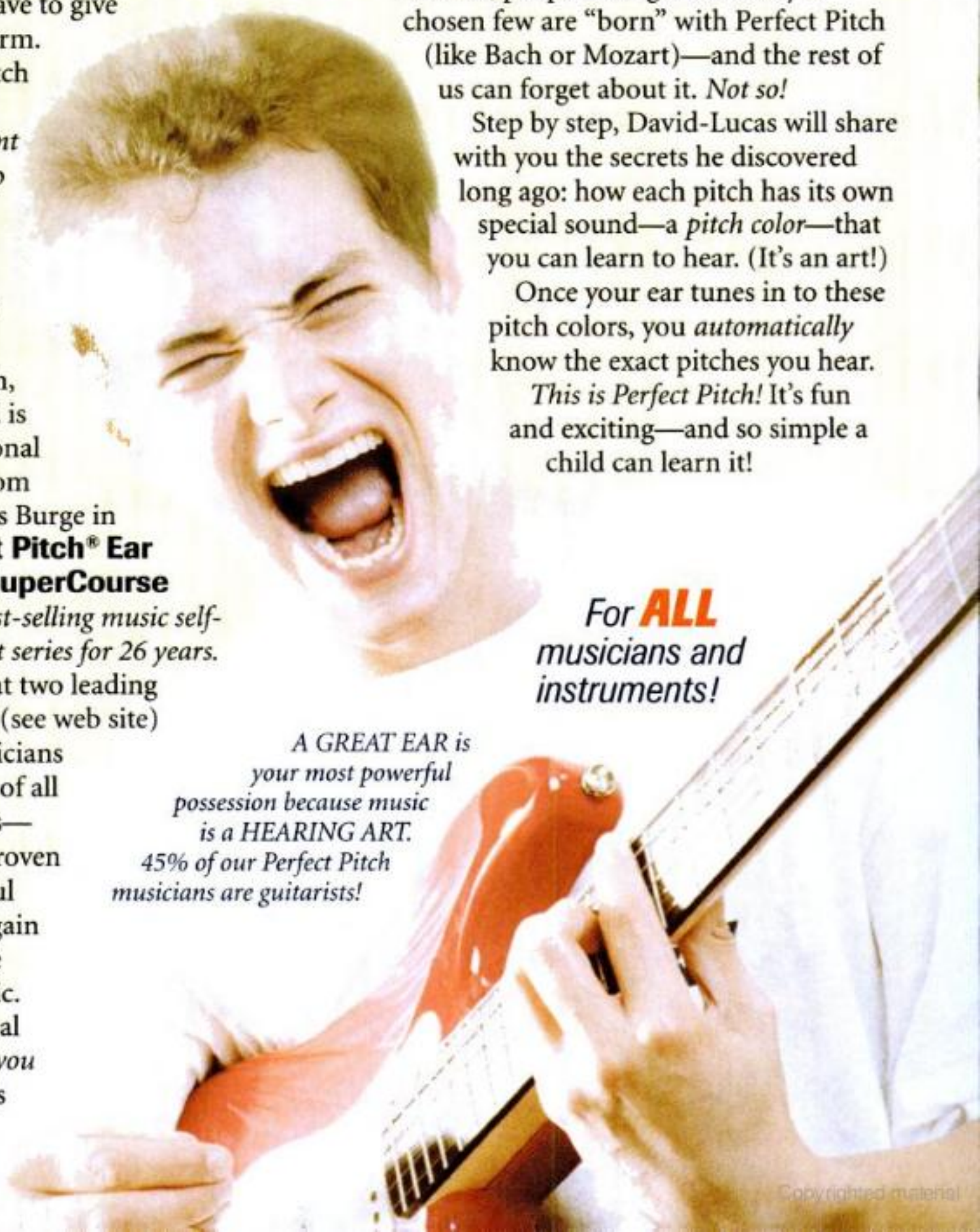
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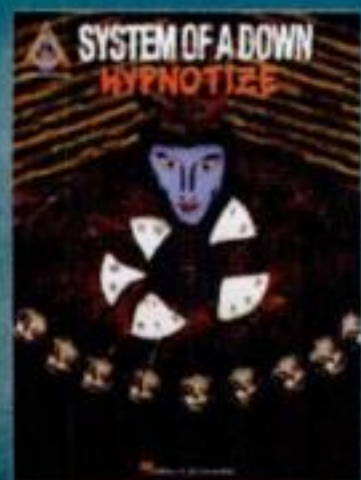
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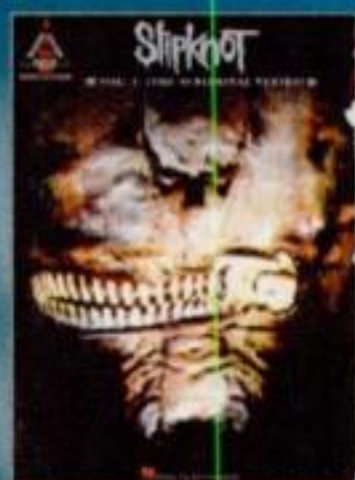
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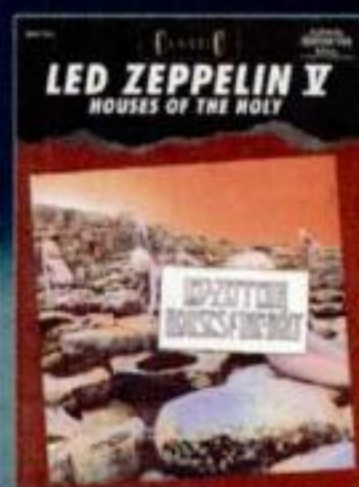


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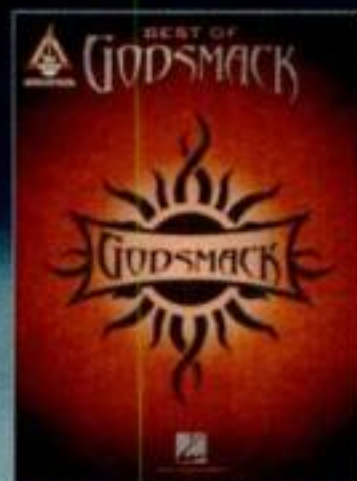
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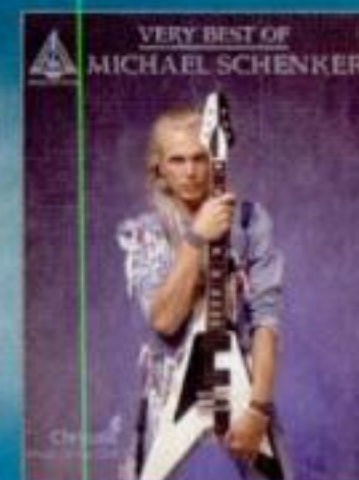
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DEMME'S DOUBLE PLAY

Machine Head's Phil Demmel tells why he likes pedals and explains his method for stomping on two at once.

By NICK BOWCOTT

>> DESIGN PHILOSOPHY Once upon a time, Machine Head's Phil Demmel played his guitars through a rack system. These days, the guitarist prefers to use pedals and a Peavey 5150 head. "Pedals just sound more organic to me," he says. "Besides, working with three knobs is definitely better than having to perform 20 different movements on a multi-effect rack unit."

In addition to the six pedals on his pedal board, Demmel has a Boss CE-5 Chorus and a Boss DD-6 Digital delay in the effect loop of his 5150. "I use those for my lead sound. They give me that warm, Satriani-type lead tone I like."

His Ibanez TS-9 reissue pedal is always on, except during a couple of clean passages. "The TS-9 has the nuts and high-end scratch you need to make palm-muted chugging nice and heavy."

>> CONTROL ISSUES Demmel performs his own pedal, effect loop and channel switching, but occasionally he needs to switch two or more pieces of gear at once. To simplify the process, he's strategically placed his gear on his pedal board. "I usually hit the TS-9 and the NS-2 at the same time, and then I hit the Clean channel switch," he says. Demmel uses this same technique whenever he plays lead. "I don't keep my [Boss NS-2] on while I'm playing leads, because I play a lot of harmonics

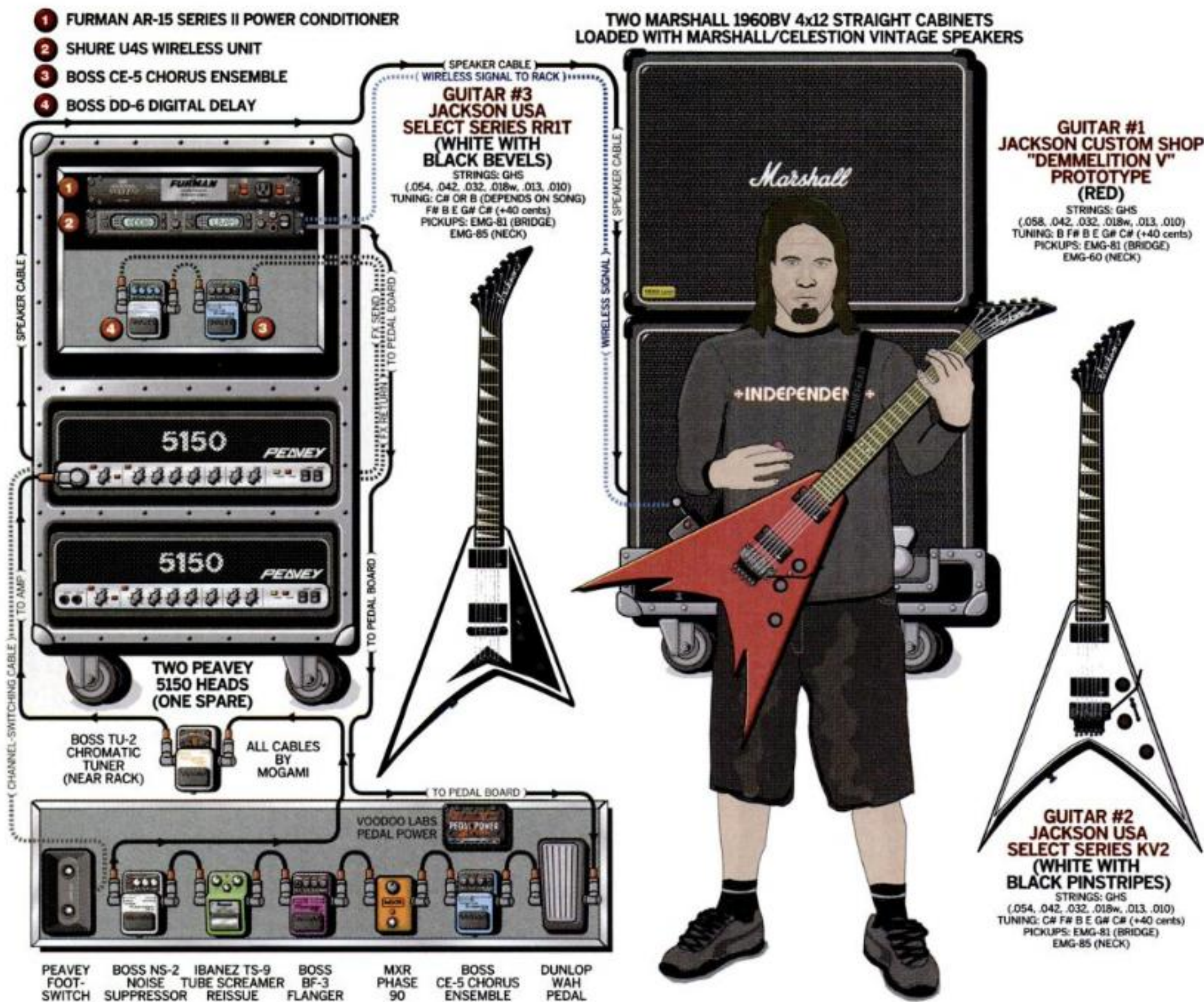
and stuff like that, and the NS-2 tends to choke them off." For this reason, he places the NS-2 and the effect loop switches next to one another. "One step gets 'em both."

>> FAVORITE PIECE OF GEAR "The Custom Shop prototype of my new Jackson signature guitar is my favorite piece of gear. It's a red KV2 with some body cutouts and an unfinished neck."

>> SECRET WEAPON "I'd have to say the effect loop of my 5150 head. It adds that special lead tone that I just love. There are a lot of great players who do leads, but their tone kinda sucks." *

A LOT OF GREAT PLAYERS DO LEADS, BUT THEIR TONE KINDA SUCKS.

Special thanks to Phil's guitar tech, James "Chief" Yepa, for his assistance





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